

Exclusive Look at Myst III: Exile

MachHome

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Solutions for Work, Play, & Education

2000

Readers' Choice Awards

Your Votes Count!

Utilities

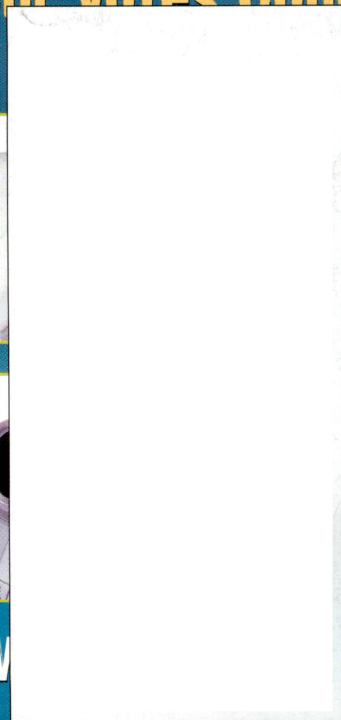
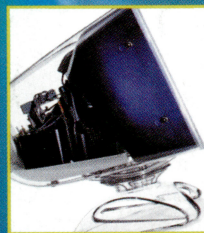
Tools You Didn't Know You Needed

Plus:

Tips & Tricks and The Mac Workshop

Reviewed

24 Products Including Excel 2001 & Color Handspring V



February 2001



Disturb the peace. Tranquility is highly overrated. Earsplitting high-SoundSticks speaker system, is most definitely not. For more seismic details,



fidelity sound, like the kind you'll get from our new 40-watt, USB-enabled
check out www.harman-multimedia.com.

harman/kardon

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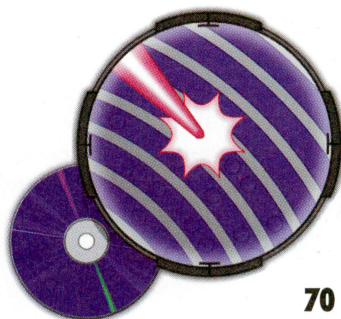


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- ★★★★★ I M&M's The Lost Formula
- ★★★★ Monopoly
- ★★★★★ I On-Track Transition Math
- ★★★★★ TechnoK'Nex Computer Control Lab

Rating System

- ★★★★★ **Mac-nificent.** You gotta get it. No flaws.
- ★★★★ **Excellent.** Recommended even if it has a minor flaw or two.
- ★★★ **Average.** Despite problems, still a worthwhile product.
- ★★ **Below Average.** Has serious flaws that limit its usefulness or fun.
- ★ **Poor.** Avoid this product at all costs.

Winter Projects

By the time most of you read this, Winter Macworld Expo 2001 will have come and gone. All the early indications have us looking forward to a busy, exciting show — perhaps a record number of exhibitors and attendees.

Many of our friends within the industry have a slew of new products to announce, from games to printers, and productivity applications to digital cameras. Be sure to check our Website (www.machome.com) for an overview after the show; print coverage will begin with our March issue.

In this issue, we announce our annual Readers' Choice awards, which has always been one of my favorites. Why? Like any top ten list, it tells those of us on the inside what you, the end-user on the outside, really like and wish for. You usually hand us a few surprises, and this year is no exception.

Form and function beat price considerations hands-down in many categories, with Apple's Dual Processor G4 winning Best Desktop and Product of the

Year. You also picked Apple's Studio Display as best monitor over less-expensive models, Harman Kardon's beautiful speaker system, and the Palm Pilot over the Handspring Visor. The full story with all the winners begins on page 14.

As many of us do this time of year, I'm trying to fill my spare time (not that there's much of it!) now that rainy winter days have chased me out of the yard and off the golf courses here in Northern California. As usual, I turn to my Macintosh for help and inspiration on the indoor projects I've got going at home right now.

For my big project, I'm in the process

of turning my living room into my dining room. I'm using my Mac to help me track expenses, contractor schedules, and other details of the project. On the creative side, my Mac is helping me try out different placements of furniture, side tables, and art, with no heavy lifting required. I may have to knock out a wall and add a fireplace before I'm finished ...

Another project I'm considering: I have a bad habit of pulling pictures, recipes, and articles out of magazines as I come across items that interest me. I end up with messy stacks of tear sheets scattered around — once again, my Mac can help out. Why not scan the pages and store them in a FileMaker database, complete with searchable keywords like "great dining table," "beautiful rug," and "interesting color scheme?" Into the recycling bin with the messy papers! Onward with my neatly organized life!

What kinds of fun, creative solutions does your Mac bring to your life? Do you have a project looming that you think would make a good Mac Workshop? Email your ideas to macworkshop@machome.com. And as always, tell us what you think of this issue: www.machome.com/FebFeedback/.

Best regards,



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Digital
Cameras



Digital Music
Players



Handheld PCs



Smart Phones



Camcorders



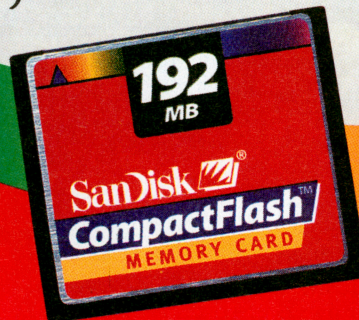
PDA's



Photos from Jeff and Lisa's
first date, engagement
party and honeymoon

How will you use it?

SanDisk offers you the flexibility to use your memory card in digital cameras, handheld PCs, digital music players, laptops, smart phones, digital video recorders and more. Our high-performance MultiMediaCard, CompactFlash™, and SmartMedia™ memory cards offer compatibility with most digital cameras. What's more, with CompactFlash, you can take up to 192MB of memories on one card. And with SanDisk's FlashPath™ adapter and ImageMate™ reader you can quickly and easily transfer data from your memory card to your computer. With the best-selling memory solutions from SanDisk, there are so many possibilities. Visit your local reseller or see us at www.sandisk.com/macworld/.



See us at MacWorld
Booth #2423, South Hall

SanDisk
More Memory. More Possibilities.

It's Called Technolust

Okay, I read the December, 2000 Mac Home, and every time I pick up your magazine, I feel I need to bring out my wallet. It seems like Apple won't stop creating new and innovative programs and gadgets that keep a guy like me bedazzled! I'm talking about the way movies can be transferred from camcorders to a hard disk with iMovie. Then there is Adobe Photoshop 6.0! It just won't stop! I'm in Apple heaven, and I now own a 350 MHz iMac and love this little gem!

Paul Dale Roberts

De-Tangler

I read with interest your article on how to create business cards in the December issue. Much to my chagrin, you used a very tedious procedure using Word and Photoshop. While I'm sure it is effective, I found that creating professional business cards is as easy as 1,2,3, using AppleWorks. Simply open AppleWorks, select assistants, then select business cards and follow each page. You can add clip art from the library in the file menu. I created some excellent cards on my iMac with this system. With the simple and easy step-by-step system offered by Appleworks, why would any one want to tangle with anything from Microsoft?

Dana R Gregory

Branding Your RAM

I own a 300MHz Blue and White Power Mac with 96MB RAM. I want to add 128MB RAM. Is there any difference in brands of RAM? Some are a lot cheaper than others. Your advice would be appreciated. Thank You.

Norman Robinson

There isn't much difference between RAM from competing companies. We tend to avoid the absolute cheapest stuff, but the middle-weight RAM works just as well as the top-of-the-line stuff.

We've Got Answers

Do you have any means of providing tech help or suggestions where I can ask a few questions?.

William Horn

For technical help, your best bet is to first contact the manufacturer of the product that is causing you grief, but we're happy to take your questions. Write to questions@machome.com for consideration.

C-D-R-O-M G-A-M-E-S

Your recent review of MacSoft's Scrabble didn't mention 2 irritating features:

- A 1-minute, pointless startup video
- The disc must be in the CD-ROM drive to play it!

This means I cannot play it on planes or on travel without carting along the CD-ROM drive.

Sharon Muir

Regrettably, these are standard practices in games, and that's why we didn't note them. However, there are ways around each grievance. First, push the escape key to skip the splash videos in most games. And to run the game without the CD, make an image of it with Apple's Disk Copy. After launching Disk Copy, select Create Image from Disk in the Image menu, and select the CD. Disk Copy will then copy the contents of your CD to your drive. Open the newly saved Scrabble.img file before playing, and the computer won't need the CD in the drive. This process doesn't work with all CD-required applications, and it needs as much drive space as the CD (up to 650MB), but it beats toting your CD-ROM drive.

Your Phone Company

I've been aware that my Mac with a microphone can be used as a telephone. An acquaintance (PC based) has given me an instruction set for accomplishing this but (alas!) I'm stuck.



I've done an Internet search using "free Internet long distance" as the search criteria and found a couple promising sites which list minimum system requirements including "Windows 95." (ARG!)

I was hoping to do a journal search through your website to learn if you had done an article on this subject, but there was no search tool on the site. Can you help me? Many thanks.

Dr. Bowen

Our search functions on the Website should be working by the time you read this; expect more exciting additions in the near future. There are some Mac options for using your Internet connection as a phone line. Try ReallyEasy Interactor at www.reallyeasy.com for a great Mac- (and PC-) compatible voice chat option. ClearPhone is also a good choice that lets you use video-chat, too (www.clearphone.com).

What's it Worth to You?

Hi! I just bought a new graphite iMac, and I love it! Now I have to sell my other Mac. Can you tell me where I can find a price on my Performa 6116, which has many extras? Thanks.

Pete Henrickson

Visit the Used Computer Exchange at www.uce.com and EveryMac.com (www.everymac.com) for detailed model specs and estimated current values. Our notes on buying and selling on eBay (in this month and next month) should help.

Reviews Are Up

I am looking for a review of cameras in the 1.5 million megapixel range for use on my 350 MHz Mac G4 desktop. It would likely be only for downloading images I would send out on email.

If you have any reviews that cover this please let me know which issue it appeared in and I will order the back issue. Thanks for your help

Doug Law

Visit www.machome.com/reviews to search all of our reviews, including the ones on digital cameras. Then pick which ones best serve your needs.

Games So New, the Code Hasn't Dried

About 2 years ago, I friend mailed me one of his MacHome game CDs. I downloaded the games & returned it to him. I accidentally deleted the games & would like to know if I can purchase the CD. Please let me know how I can get a MacHome game CD.

Thank You,

DeeDee Iannucci

Our new 2001 Games CD is in duplication. To receive the disc, simply subscribe or renew your subscription to MacHome. Hours of shareware, commercial demos, and other fun software is on its way.

We're Blushing

I'm writing you in order to ask for your forgiveness. In a moment of weakness I succumbed to temptation of the worst kind... that's right, not only did I let my subscription to MacHome lapse, I... I... I subscribed to MacWorld! There! I said it.

Can you ever forgive me? After signing on for a subscription, I received the promised 2 CDs and quickly discovered they were not only a disappointment, they were useless! I wouldn't waste the space on my hard drive. There is no comparison between MacWorld's trash CDs, and the great CDs that come with a MacHome subscription! Likewise with the articles, tips, and such. Let's face it... MacHome Rules!

When I had finely come to my senses I rushed right over to the telephone, credit card in hand, and reconnected to the Best Mac Magazine out there... MacHome! **MHJ**

Fredrick Martello

write to us...

Please write us with your comments! All letters are assumed intended for publication and may be edited. You can reach us by snail mail at: 703 Market Street, Suite 535, San Francisco, CA 94103, or by email:

letters@machome.com

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Your USB 2 Card Has Arrived

You've heard about the new USB 2 standard, and how much faster it transfers information than the old version, and now you're itching to upgrade. Well, you're in luck

because Belkin has come out with a **USB 2 PCI Card** to use with new high-speed USB peripherals such as video cameras, audio devices, and scanners. The card, which can transfer data at up to 480Mbps (megabits per second), as opposed to the previous 12Mbps, is designed to

manage bandwidth for each connected device to eliminate waste. Slated for release in January for \$100, this card is compatible with your previous USB products.

Belkin has also introduced a six-port FireWire hub to help you connect multiple FireWire peripherals (if you should happen to own several) through a single port. Available in March for \$100, it sports a space age design which goes especially nicely with the Cube, Power Mac G4, and iMacs. Six LEDs alert you to power and port status.

Belkin, 800-223-5546, www.belkin.com

It's a CD-RW World

If you're looking for convenient back-up storage on CD for your MP3 music, audio CDs, data back up, and more, check out the new **TEAC USB CD-RW** drive.

This external 4 (write) x 4 (rewrite) x 6 (read) drive is bundled with Adaptec Toast, though the company says that the 2x write speed works better on the Mac. The drive features a 16.6 MBps (that's megabytes per second to you) data transfer rate for multimedia playback and includes a power loading

tray, front LED indicators, volume knob, and headphone jack. (P.S. TEAC is also shipping its USB Mac floppy drive in all Mac colors — including the new colors and black — for about \$79.)

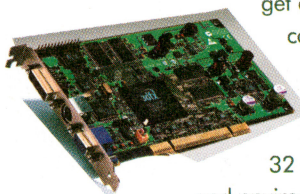
TEAC America, 323-726-0303, www.teac.com



The Razor's Edge

Are you a gamer, artist, businessperson, or student who needs razor sharp graphics at any resolution? Have a look at 3dfx's new **Voodoo4 4500 PCI** graphics board for \$180. You get accelerated 2D/3D rendering capability designed to significantly enhance image quality. Look for 2D resolutions as high as 2,048 x 1,536 pixels at 32 bit. If you're viewing 3D images and environments, this board gives you a fill rate of 333 megapixels per second to render real-time 3D.

3dfx Interactive, 800-234-4334, www.3dfx.com



Link Up

Increasingly, teachers, small businesses, and home users are relying on real-time audio and video conferencing to communicate over the

Internet. Smith Micro has come out with

Videolink pro video conferencing software for \$60, to meet your needs, whether you are communicating with other Mac or even Windows users. Use this QuickTime-based phone/chat/video program on the Internet or your Local Area Network (LAN). It supports fast Ethernet and AirPort, too.

Smith Micro Software, 949-362-5800

www.smithmicro.com



Let's Hear from You!

Write us a quick note and tell us what you think of this month's issue! Visit us at:

www.machome.com/febfeedback

Cameras to the People

Can there ever be too many digital cameras to choose from? Only if their number surpasses every individual currently breathing, or so it seems. Umax has come out with the **AstraCam 1800**, an affordable 1.3 megapixel camera for the non-professional point-and-shooter, for \$199. Get 5" x 7" prints from this unit, which features an optical resolution of 1,280 x 960 dpi, three-mode automatic flash, and automatic white balance. Images are stored on a 4MB SmartMedia card, which comes with the package. This camera offers a USB connection, NTSC video-out for viewing images on your TV screen, and Adobe PhotoDeluxe Home Edition.

Umax, 800-562-0311, www.umax.com



Web Premiere

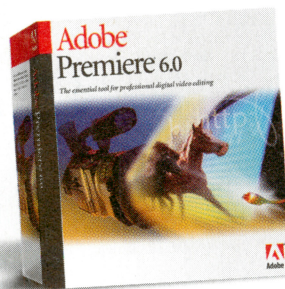
If you're editing video for the Web, have a look at **Adobe Premiere 6**, an upgrade of the digital video editing program. The new version, which will ship in the first quarter of 2001, specializes in digital video

(DV) to Web output, featuring video capture, editing, and output to streaming formats. The new version features built-in support for all types of DV devices, the company says, as well as support for non-square pixels and certain DV presets. With a single

step, you can create streaming video for your Website.

Premiere 6, for \$549, features interface refinements such as a professional audio mixer and an Automate to Timeline feature. There's a Save for Web feature that lets you output multiple files optimized for streaming or progressive download in formats such as QuickTime, RealMedia, MPEG, and others. Web markers lets you set timeline markers that include links to HTML pages, and these let you launch HTML pages at relevant points during Web video playback.

Adobe, 800-833-6687, www.adobe.com

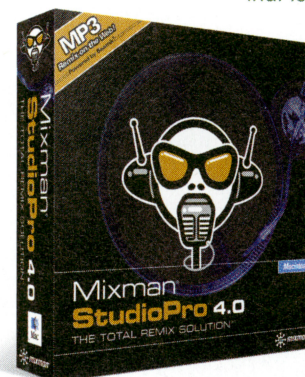


Music to Your Ears

Are you into sound? If the answer is yes, then you might have a look at Beatnik's **Mixman StudioPro 4**, a DJ remixing software package for \$90, designed for the music hobbyist. This program gives you a suite of professional remixing tools

that let you create, perform, and publish your work from concept to completion.

Remixing Studio gives you real-time remixing, while FX Studio lets you manipulate component sounds. Editing and Recording studios let you compose and add personalized sounds into each mix. The software comes



with a library of sounds including guitars,

drums, vocals, and keyboards that you can use to create original songs.

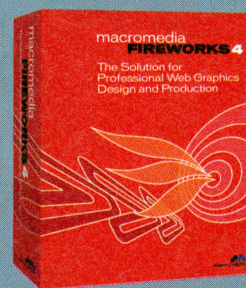
Beatnik, 877-295-6593, www.mixman.com

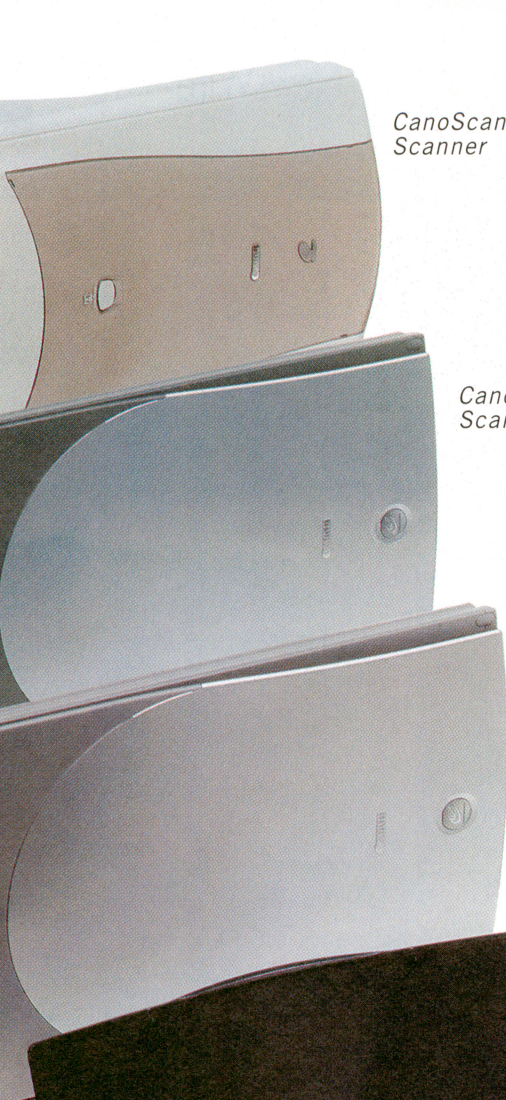
Fireworks 4

If you're a Web graphics fanatic, there's reason to cheer the release of **Fireworks 4**, a \$299 upgrade from Macromedia. Fireworks 4 lets you create, edit, and animate Web graphics with both bitmap and vector tools. Optimize your images, give them advanced interactivity, and then

export them into the Dreamweaver Web authoring program or any HTML editor. Fireworks 4 lets you create animations, drag-and-drop rollovers, and import and export images from Photoshop.

Macromedia, 800-470-7211, www.macromedia.com





*CanoScan D660U
Scanner*

*CanoScan N656U
Scanner*

*CanoScan N1220U
Scanner*



BJC-85 Printer

Peripheral

Take a quick look around. You'll find a Mac® compatible Canon peripheral for just about any purpose you could imagine. From high-resolution printers and scanners to the world's best-selling portable printer, we've got what it takes to keep Mac users smiling. And with



The Canon Think Tank System™

The S400, S450 and BJC-8200 printers all feature individual ink tanks to reduce ink waste and save you money. Plus, the ink sensor system alerts you when you're running low.

Award-Winning Portable Printer

Need a traveling companion for your iBook™ or PowerBook® G3? Our 3.1 pound BJC-85 Color Bubble Jet Printer was named "Best of Show" at the Macworld San Francisco 2000 Expo.*

Vision

more than sixty years of imaging expertise built into every single detail, the term "state-of-the-art" is somewhat of an understatement. Come and see for yourself. Visit us on the Internet at www.ccsi.canon.com/macfriendly or call 1-800-OK-CANON for more information.

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S400 Printer

*MultiPASS C555
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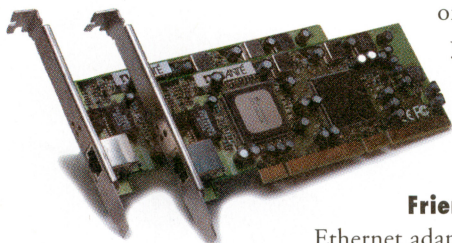
Our new CanoScan® family showcases a host of innovative features including our Z-Lid™ Expansion Top (on select models) and a built-in 35mm film adapter on the CanoScan D660U Scanner.

Superior Multifunction Printers

Print. Fax. Copy. Scan. After introducing the world's first Mac-compatible multifunction printer, we've taken technology to a new level with our MultiPASS™ C555 Multifunction Printer.

Huge File Transfers

So what, you might ask, what does a 10/100/1000 BaseT Gigabit Ethernet adapter have to do with me? Perhaps plenty, especially if you're in the habit of transferring large video or graphic files from one computer in your office to another via your Local Area Network (LAN). While some Macs have a 100 BaseT Ethernet built in, that may be too slow to transfer huge files over your current Ethernet network. Now, with Asante's



FriendlyNet GigaNIX 1000TA copper gigabit

Ethernet adapter, for \$249, you can transfer files at 1000 BaseT, and that's way faster. The 1000 BaseT standard is already built into the Power Mac G4 (though not the Cube), however, with an upgrade card, you can get 1000 BaseT with any Power Mac.

Asante, 800-566-6680, www.asante.com

Taking It To Xtremes

If you're looking for a portable external hard drive to use on the road with your PowerBook, as well as at your home or office with your Power Mac G4 or iMac, have a look at the **DataShuttle Xtreme** from Mac Components Engineered (MCE), which comes in 10GB (\$299), 20GB (\$399), and 30GB (\$649) capacities. While it comes with a default FireWire attachment cable, USB and PCMCIA card attachment cables are available as options and sold separately. A do-it-yourself kit version



of this hardware allows you to install your own 2.5" hard drive directly into the enclosure. The unit draws its power from computers with built-in FireWire ports, and it includes FireWire driver software that allows formatting, partitioning, and password protection.

Mac Components Engineered, 800-500-0622, www.powerbook1.com

Dazzle 'Em

Sometimes it's hard to feel like we haven't been dragged kicking and screaming into the digital world, and nowhere is that more evident than with video. Here's the scene: You've got analog videotaped material and a bunch of digital video you want to mix with it. This has traditionally been difficult, as the two formats are inherently incompatible.



Dazzle's Hollywood DV-

Bridge, a FireWire-based analog-to-DV converter for \$299, can solve this dilemma by letting you capture older analog video, mix the two formats, edit your material, and output the final piece in either analog or digital format. You can also use this converter to transfer video from a DV camcorder into an analog camcorder (or the

other way around) without connecting the converter to the computer. Dazzle Multimedia, 888-436-4348, www.dazzle.com

Virtual PC 4 Arrives

If you are forced to run non-Mac applications on your Mac, have a look at **Virtual PC 4.0**, a new upgrade of Connectix's PC emulation program for \$199 (with Windows 98). The new version runs up to twice as fast as previous versions, the company says. Virtual PC 4 lets you run several operating systems at once, gives you improved networking in an office environment, and sports a new, easier user interface.

Connectix, 800-950-5880

www.connectix.com

Listen Up!

MacSpeech has released iListen 1.0, a speech recognition program. Using the Philips Speech Processing FreeSpeech 2000 speech engine, iListen, (for \$99 without headset and \$139 with a headset), works in the background, letting you dictate

into many Mac applications. iListen uses the TalkAnywhere dictation technology that converts spoken words into typewritten text and characters. Version 1 includes a free upgrade to the next version.

MacSpeech, 978-355-4872, www.macspeech.com



New Drive Combos

QPS has just released a set of external drive combinations that are sure to satisfy those who are looking for both a hard drive and a removable storage drive. The **Que! M3 Dual Drive** features a hard drive in 6GB, 10GB and 20GB configurations with your choice of a 1.44MB floppy drive or LS 120/240 SuperDISK drive (with the 6GB), or 640MB MO (magneto optical) drive (with the 10GB or 20GB). Choose a FireWire or USB 2 interface. Prices start at \$399 for the 6GB and \$599 for the larger capacities. They ship in early January.



If you're looking for small, portable, stackable external hard drives, the Que! M2 QuadSlim palm-sized FireWire drives come in 6GB (\$279), 10GB (\$379), 20GB (\$479), and 30 GB (\$579) capacities. They are so small and light, you can carry one in your pocket.

QPS is also launching a line of USB 2 storage devices, using the swift new USB standard. Devices such as the Que! CD-RW, DVD-RAM, hard drives, and the new M3 Dual Drive can now transfer data up to 480Mbps per second, some 40 times faster than the older USB 1.1 standard.

QPS, 800-559-4777

www.qps-inc.com

Carry in iStyle

We know that the iBook sports a retractable handle, and that, theoretically, you need nothing more to transport your Key Lime laptop around town. But if you're the meticulous

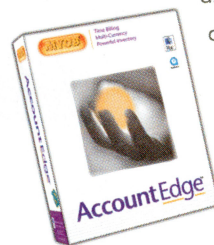


type, or you happen to have a PowerBook, have a look at ActiveBag's new cases for your portable Mac. The **Active iBook Bag** line (imported from Italy where they know about fashion) is available in the three iBook colors and a tasteful dark gray for your PowerBook. Weighing less than two pounds, these bags have pockets and other compartments for cables and accessories.

Active, www.activebag.com

Small Business Edge

Those running a small business know the importance of proper financials. MYOB has introduced **Account-Edge** for \$249, a business accounting and financial management program that works with both the current Mac operating system and Mac OS X. It features a simple and intuitive inter-



face that gives you a full range of business, inventory, and contact management functions. A newly designed Card File holds information about customers and vendors, and also integrates with the Checkbook and Sales and Purchases. Invoices, quotes, and orders can be accomplished in two or three clicks.

MYOB US

973-586-2200

www.myob.com/us

New Monitors

Flat panel monitor technology is becoming increasingly popular as the price becomes more accessible to mainstream users. NEC-Mitsubishi has introduced two flat-panel models — the **NEC MultiSync LCD1530V**, the 15-inch model, and the LCD1700M, the 17-inch model — for \$799 and \$1,499 respectively. These monitors feature reduced power consumption and heat output, as well as improved resolution. The 15-inch model offers a default resolution of 1,024 x 768 pixels, while the 17-inch display has a default resolution of 1,280 x 1,024 pixels.

Then there's Samsung with its new SyncMaster T series digital/analog LCD monitors: the 150T, at 15"; the 170T at 17"; and the 180T at 18" screen sizes. These displays give you the choice of either a digital or an analog interface for viewing images and text. Prices range from \$849 to \$2,449.

NEC-Mitsubishi Electronics Display of America

888-632-6487, www.necmitsubishi.com

Samsung, 800-726-7864, www.samsungmonitor.com



2000 Readers' Choice Awards

We've had our say (and will doubtless have it again!) but now it's time for you to have yours. That's right, it's time for the 2000 annual Readers' Choice Awards, wherein you get to shoot your mouth off at us, rather than the other way around. A few months ago we asked all of our esteemed readers to tell us their favorite products in hardware, software, games, creativity, Internet and a host of other categories. We implored you not to be shy, not to hold back your true feelings. And you didn't. So now, here are this year's winners.

Desktop Computer: Dual Processor Power Mac G4

In a heated battle, we found that you certainly like the G4 Cube, and you can't stop thinking about iMacs (can't blame you!), but what you really lust for — lust for — is the mighty Dual Processor G4 Power Mac. Even though most of you actually use iMacs, that doesn't mean you wouldn't want a graphite tower of power to call your own for a mere \$2,500 and up. Sure, it's not as petite as the Cube, but it offers options such as adding video cards, SCSI cards, and extra drives. *Apple, 800-692-7753, www.apple.com*

Portable Computer: iBook

What can we say except, these iBooks just get better and better, taking this category by storm with twice as many votes as the PowerBook G3. With

the iBook, Apple took an excellent product and polished it until it shined. We've said it, and you agree, these are the perfect consumer portables, starting at about \$1,500. They're built user-tough for the classroom, and the newest have sophisticated features such as AirPort, analog video-out, USB, and FireWire. But that's not all. Apple sweetens the deal with iMovie 2 so that all you have to do is plug in your video camera, and voila, you're making movies. And it's packed with a modem and Ethernet, so you're online easily. *Apple, 800-692-7753, www.apple.com*

Personal Digital Assistant Company: Palm Inc.

This was an interesting contest: Handspring's Visor, which actually uses the same operating system as the Palm, weighed in with a good chunk of votes, but in the end that wasn't enough to unseat the powerful Palm, the tiny organizer that fits, well, in your pocket. There were a number of favorite models within the Palm category, whose prices start at \$150, including the Palm III, and the Palm VX. We noted that a few of you still use (and swear by)



By MacHome Staff

your paperback-sized Apple Newtons.

Palm Computing
800-881-7256
www.palm.com

CRT Monitor: **Apple Studio Display**

There are lots and lots of monitors out there, but your hands-down favorite is the Apple 17-inch studio display for \$499. In addition to its eye-catching case, and its bright, clear, sharp rendering of images and text, it is a perfect aesthetic complement to the Cube and desktop G4s. Second on your list was Sony's 17-inch models — both displays are based on the same technology, but, as Macophiles, you naturally gave the nod to fashion.

Apple, 800-692-7753, www.apple.com

External Modem: **Global Village**

Despite that this modem manufacturer has changed hands (Zoom Telephonics, Inc. acquired the company last August), you tell us that its modems still connect like no others. The runner up in this category is the U.S. Robotics 56k modem, which range from \$90 to \$150.

Zoom Telephonics
800-631-3116

www.globalvillage.com

U.S. Robotics, 866-287-7669

www.usr.com

Scanner: Umax Astra/ **Agfa SnapScan**

The most popular scanner manufacturers vied once again for your affections this year. Various Umax Astra models accounted for the most votes, with the 1220U in the lead, and the 2200U (\$119) and 2100U (\$79), nipping at its heels. These scanners feature push button ease to scan, copy, or send images and documents to e-mail, text, and image editing programs. Updates replacing the 1220U and the 2000U are already on the market. However, that did nothing to diminish your love for the Agfa SnapScan Touch. The SnapScan Touch USB scanner sports four simple buttons that take



the learning curve out of scanning. Check out Agfa's recent SnapScan models, such as the e20 for \$69; e40 for \$149; and the e50 for \$179, which has a transparency cover.

Agfa, 888-281-2302

www.agfahome.com

Umax, 800-562-0311

www.umax.com

CD-R/CD-RW: **QPS Que! USB Drive**

While there are many CD-Rs and CD-RWs out there y'all went in a rather large way for the QPS Que! USB drive. You expressed admiration for this 4x4x8 drive for \$249, which offers up to a 700KB per second data transfer rate with a 2MB buffer. It comes with CD-mastering software, CD recordable and rewritable media, and a carrying case.

QPS, 800-559-4777, www.qps-inc.com

Digital Camera: **Nikon CoolPix 990**

We always knew our readers were tasteful, and perhaps we didn't know just how tasteful until we found out your favorite digital camera. Your far and away favorite is the Nikon CoolPix 990, a 3.34 megapixel professional imaging tool that gives you high resolutions, 3X zoom lens, and creative

control. Your second choice was the Sony Mavica, a floppy disk-based product which now has now been bestowed with Memory Stick capabilities. So now, even if you don't have a floppy drive (an how many iMac and G4 users have one of those things?), Sony has introduced a camera-ready Memory Stick floppy disk adapter. Three recent Mavica models include: the MVC-FD85; the MVC-FD90; and the MVC-FD95, for approximately \$700, \$800, and \$1,000, respectively. The older MVC-FD73 is available for about \$500.

Sony, 888-476-6972, www.sony.com

Nikon, 800-645-6687

www.nikonusa.com

Camcorder: **Canon ZR-10**

You've seen the Apple commercials for iMovie 2, and you already know how easy it is to edit home movies using a digital video camcorder. The Canon ZR-10 proved to be your favorite for about \$1,000, letting you just plug the FireWire cable and play. What's neat about the ZR-10 is its compact size and rotating color viewing screen. You didn't complain about the features either: its got 200X zoom, full VCR features, and an extendable viewfinder.

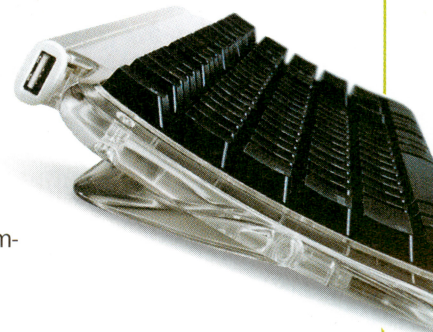
Canon, 800-828-4040, www.canon.com



Input Device: Apple Pro Keyboard

What with all the complaints about Apple's dinky little keyboard, it seems like the company finally got it right. The Apple Pro Keyboard rocks. You said it, and we agree. The standard keyboard, for \$59, now has full-sized arrows and Function keys just like the popular Apple Extended Keyboard that it was modeled after. The Pro Keyboard fairly pulsates with good design; the plastics are chic-clear, and it matches the museum-quality design of Apple's computers.

Apple, 800-692-7753, www.apple.com



Removable Storage: **Iomega Zip 100 and 250**

When you think about external storage, one of the first manufacturers that comes to mind is Iomega. This company has been making the ever-popular Zip drives for a long time, now. The Zip 100 and 250 cartridges, which you chose as your favorites, are perfect for the average file transfer and for backing up all kinds of files and folders on your hard drive. Prices are \$100 and \$180, respectively.

Iomega, 888-446-6342, www.iomega.com



Email Program: **Microsoft Outlook Express**

Although Microsoft couldn't quite win you over in the word processor category, it sure has you convinced that its email program, Outlook Express, is the best thing going. Outlook Express makes managing your email as easy as it can be with the use of folders, filters, and great newsgroup viewing capabilities. And it's free!

*Microsoft, 800-426-9400
www.microsoft.com*

Graphics Card: **ATI Rage 128**

ATI has done a great job of delivering powerful graphics cards to Mac professionals and game enthusiasts alike for many years now, and you have honored that with your votes. The Rage 128 card, which, up until recently had been standard in previous Apple computers, gives you all the resolution, power, and speed you need to run everything from Photoshop to Quake. It also makes a great expansion card if you want to run two monitors off of one computer.

*ATI, 905-882-2600
www.ati.com*

Upgrade Card: **Sonnet and NewerTech**

When it came to upgrade cards, your favorite was a squeaker between the Sonnet G3 upgrade card, followed closely by NewerTech's G3. We agree that these are both great cards that will make your Mac scream with new-found speed, starting at \$200.

*Sonnet, 949-457-8500
www.sonnettech.com
Newer Technology, 316-943-0222
www.newertech.com*

Color Inkjet Printer: **Epson Stylus 740**

Epson continues to dominate your home printing systems with its high-quality printers, and the Stylus 740 won for the second year



in a row. While this particular model has been replaced with the 777 for \$99, the 740 retains its place in your hearts. Perhaps it's all those iMac colors!

Epson, 800-463-7766, www.epson.com

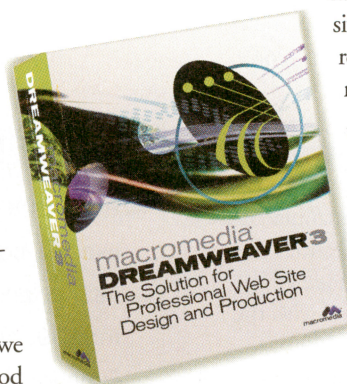
Monochrome Laser Printer: **Hewlett-Packard 6MP**

When it comes to laser printers, HP has a great track record, and you rated the 6MP very highly. Though this model has been discontinued, a replacement would be the LaserJet 2100M for \$769. You were also quite enthusiastic about Epson laser printers, which ran a close second. *Hewlett Packard, Inc., 800-552-8500
www.hp.com*

Word Processor: **AppleWorks**

This is the third year in a row that AppleWorks has captured this category. Despite the seeming ubiquity of Microsoft Word, AppleWorks managed to pull a win with you, and we are very proud of your good judgment. Although

it doesn't have all of the same bells and whistles as the all-hallowed Word, for a mere \$79, it does what you need it to do without a lot of memory demands or flashiness. *Apple, 800-692-7753
www.apple.com*



Internet Browser: **Netscape Communicator**

The browser wars continue. Netscape, for the fourth year in a row, rules your browser world. This is probably because of its ease to use and its clean, uncluttered interface. The burning question is, what will you think of Netscape 6?

*Netscape, 650-254-1900
www.netscape.com*

System Enhancement: **Mac OS Update and RAM**

You've told us, and it's true, that two of the best ways to improve the performance of your Mac are to upgrade the operating system and to add memory. Both are fairly easy to do, relatively inexpensive, and provide you with a rejuvenated Mac that is ready to rock.

*Apple, 800-538-9696
www.apple.com*

Web Authoring Program: **Dreamweaver**

Making Websites is getting darn easy these days, and you can even

do it for free if you play your cards right. But, that didn't stop you from purchasing Dreamweaver in large numbers over the well-known Adobe GoLive and Claris HomePage. With Dreamweaver, for about \$299, you found that you can create a remarkably advanced Website with just a little know-how and some creative talent.

Although it's a bit pricey, you can develop personal and professional sites with room for expansion and technical enhancements. *Macromedia, 800-457-1774 www.macromedia.com*



ular built-in email and contact management program — seemed to fill some of the gaps that the previous versions left out. You can get it for \$499.

*Microsoft, 800-426-9400
www.microsoft.com*

ISP: EarthLink

Among ISPs, Earthlink was always considered Mac friendly, so it's no surprise that Apple partner EarthLink remains high on your list of ISP favorites. Not only does EarthLink come bundled with all Apple computers, it has a wide range of services from dial-up Internet access via Sprint (for a very reasonable \$20 a month), DSL, Cable modem, and business services. You can even host your business Website on Earthlink. *EarthLink, 888-327-8454
www.earthlink.net*

Business Software: Microsoft Office 2001

Microsoft has traditionally dominated the small business side of productivity computing, and the new version of Office is a big hit with you. The program's integrated features — including Entourage, the pop-

Utilities: TechTool Pro 3

Disk repair and diagnostic utilities are the most important elements of keeping your Mac healthy, and this year Tech Tool Pro beat out the venerable Norton Utilities by a healthy margin. The new version, 3.0.2, with its virus protection and conflict checking, also recovers lost data, repairs drive problems (Zip, Firewire, USB), optimizes hard drives, backs up critical directory data, and more for \$98. *Micromat, 800-829-6227
www.micromat.com*

Finance Application: Quicken 2000

There haven't been that many choices in the Mac market for personal and small business finance apps over the years. But in the case of Quicken, it never seemed to matter that much. Here is an applica-

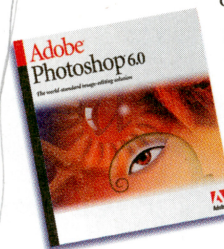
tion that gave you everything you needed to keep pace with your finances, and it had the good grace to keep evolving. You overwhelmingly supported that view by voting Quicken 2000 as the best in its category. Last year's version has obviously been replaced by a new, and improved Quicken 2001 Deluxe, complete with automated online tax filing, for \$60. *Intuit, 800-446-8848, www.quicken.com*

Music Software: SoundJam MP

For MP3 listening and ripping, it's SoundJam for the *MacHome* crowd. And we have to agree with you here. There are few MP3 encoder/players with the power and ease of use of SoundJam. It's no wonder so many MP3 hardware companies use SoundJam as their software package. It's clear that folks are using SoundJam MP Plus (\$40 download, \$50 in the box) to archive audio and encode their entire music collection. *Casady & Greene, 800-359-4920
www.casadyg.com*

Creativity Application: Adobe Photoshop

Okay folks, this would almost get boring if it weren't for the kick-butt improvements that Adobe keeps making to that mother-of-all-image editing programs, Photoshop, which is now in version 6. There's nothing really mysterious about this. If you have a digital camera, you're scanning photos, or you're creating a Website the way everyone seems to be these days, then readers say Photoshop is a must-have. There is no doubt about your consistency. It was the favorite last year, for about \$600, and it's the favorite this year. *Adobe, 800-833-6687, www.adobe.com*



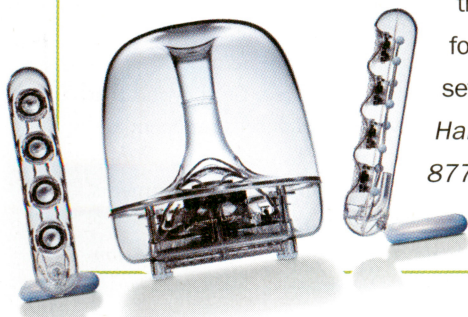
Accessory Manufacturer: Harman Kardon

With computers it's not only what you see on the screen, it's also what you hear and how nice it sounds. Those of you who thought speakers were important, voted for the Harman Kardon brand, whether it be the speakers that come with your Cube or the iSub. We agree that Harman Kardon's design is on the space-age side, and you agreed that's part of its charm. The iSub (the iMac subwoofer) for \$99 gives your 350MHz iMac and iMac DVs stereo quality sound for

music, movies and games. More recently, the company introduced SoundSticks for \$199, a slick-looking three-piece set for any USB Mac.

*Harman Multimedia
877-266-6202*

www.harman-multimedia.com



Learning Software: JumpStart & Transparent Language

From the heaps of learning software for kids and grown-ups alike, you chose winners that meet the needs of both. Winners? Ooh, we love ties. Kids and parents agree, for the second year in a row, that Knowledge

Adventure's JumpStart series rules. Its titles, for \$20 and up, focus on reading and math, while full-grade titles feature a year's curriculum for toddlers through sixth graders. The other crown goes to the Transparent Language series, which includes *Languages of the World*. These programs, starting at \$10, hone in on "survival phrases" for greeting, exchanging money, and receiving directions in various languages.

Knowledge Adventure, 800-542-4240
www.knowledgeadventure.com

Transparent Series, 888-245-1829
www.transparent.com

Kids Creativity Software: **Kid Pix**

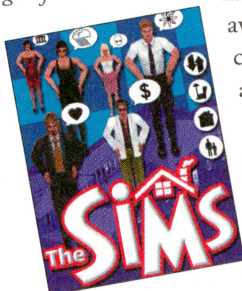
If your little one has a habit of using those crayons and markers on tough-to-clean surfaces, it might be time to pick up a copy of The Learning Company's Kid Pix, your choice by leaps and bounds for the second year running. There's no such thing as coloring inside the lines with this \$30 program — kids 3 through 12 can play with sound, animation, painting, and more. The kid-friendly interactivity includes vibrant colors, and many cute tools.

Mattel Interactive, 800-395-0277
www.mattelinteractive.com

Simulation Game: **The Sims**

You agree that this game is worthy of

those five apples (*MacHome*, November, 2000) we gave it a few months back. Those of us who've set up house with a Sim family have experienced the genius firsthand. And with *The Sims: Livin' Large Expansion Pack* now



available — with new characters, furniture, and architecture to add to the mix — as well as new object downloads available occasionally from Aspyr's Website, that mini world, for \$50, is ever-expanding.

Aspyr, 888-212-7797 www.aspyr.com

Strategy Game: **StarCraft**

Friendly competition is healthy. This year the tables have turned in your mind, and StarCraft has edged out last year's victor, Myth II. A close race again, StarCraft takes the title by a smidge. This blockbuster space strategy game for \$20 hurls players into real-time intergalactic combat, and there's a rich storyline to boot. We're glad you agree that this five apple recipient (*MacHome* June, 1999) is as worthy of your attention and adoration as ever.

Blizzard Entertainment, 800-953-7669
www.blizzard.com

Action Game: **Deus Ex**

It's terribly rewarding when we find ballot after ballot in alignment with our own opinions. MacHome readers agree

with our review of *Deus Ex* (*MacHome* November, 2000). This \$50 title, a first-person shooter with a wonderful storyline and layers of intrigue, challenges beginners and fully satisfies veteran gamers. Bottom line: When you're up against a bunch of bad guys seeking world domination, trust no one.

Aspyr, 888-212-7797, www.aspyr.com

Fantasy Game: **Diablo II**

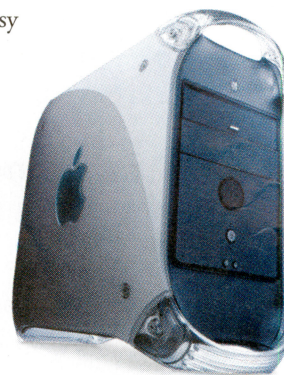
This heavyweight entry, also a five-apple recipient (*MacHome*, November, 2000) from Blizzard Entertainment is among this year's greatest hits for \$50. With five character classes to choose from, gameplay is as endless as Diablo II's world is dark and dangerous... and fun.

Blizzard Entertainment, 800-953-7669
www.blizzard.com

Best Overall Hardware: **Dual Processor Power Macintosh G4**

We thought that we'd see more Cube votes, but when the dust settled, the Dual G4 had trounced the Cube with twice as many points. And why not? Stick two 500MHz G4 processors in a classy graphite enclosure, and you've got a killer machine for about \$2,500. The G4 is tricked up with options, too, including AirPort and FireWire connectivity. The only thing better than a dual processor Power Mac G4 is a dual processor Power Mac G4 with a Cinema Display.

Apple, 800-692-7753, www.apple.com



Best Overall Software: **AppleWorks**

Lots of you have Apple's venerable productivity application because it was bundled with your iMac. But beyond that, AppleWorks, which sells independently for \$79, earned your respect as a solutions-oriented app. Create documents, newsletters, graphics, and more.

Apple, 800-692-7753, www.apple.com

Adventure Game: **Tomb Raider series**

Here's looking at Lara. The Tomb Raider series of games, which range in price from \$10 to \$50, and starring the talented Ms. Croft, is your

favorite again this year. Perhaps your undying adoration is due to her impressive acrobatics and gun-slinging capabilities. Maybe it's her Jane

Russell-esque attributes. We suspect those in combination with gorgeous graphics and downright fun gameplay.

The latest in the series from Aspyr is *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*. And hold onto

your ammo — *Tomb Raider: Chronicles* is right around the corner.

Aspyr, 888-212-7797, www.aspyr.com



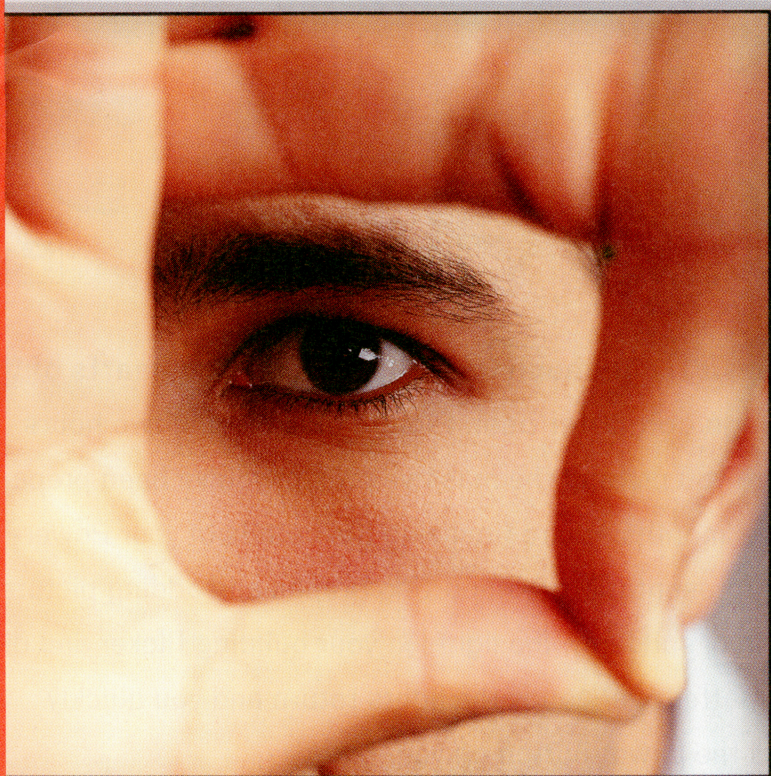
INSPIRATION.

I let you view images in perfect detail.

Visualize. Create. Refine.

I see your ideas. I make them happen.

I'm your monitor. I help you explore
the furthest reaches of your imagination.



MultiSync FP1370

NEC

MultiSync®
FP Series™



	FP950	FP1350X	FP1370
Viewable Size	18"	20"	20"
Max Resolution	1920 x 1440 @ 73 Hz	1920 x 1440 @ 76 Hz (analog) 1600 x 1200 @ 60 Hz (digital)	2048 x 1536 @ 80 Hz
Grille Pitch	0.25mm - 0.27mm (variable)	0.25mm - 0.27mm (variable)	0.24mm

The NEC MultiSync® FP Series.

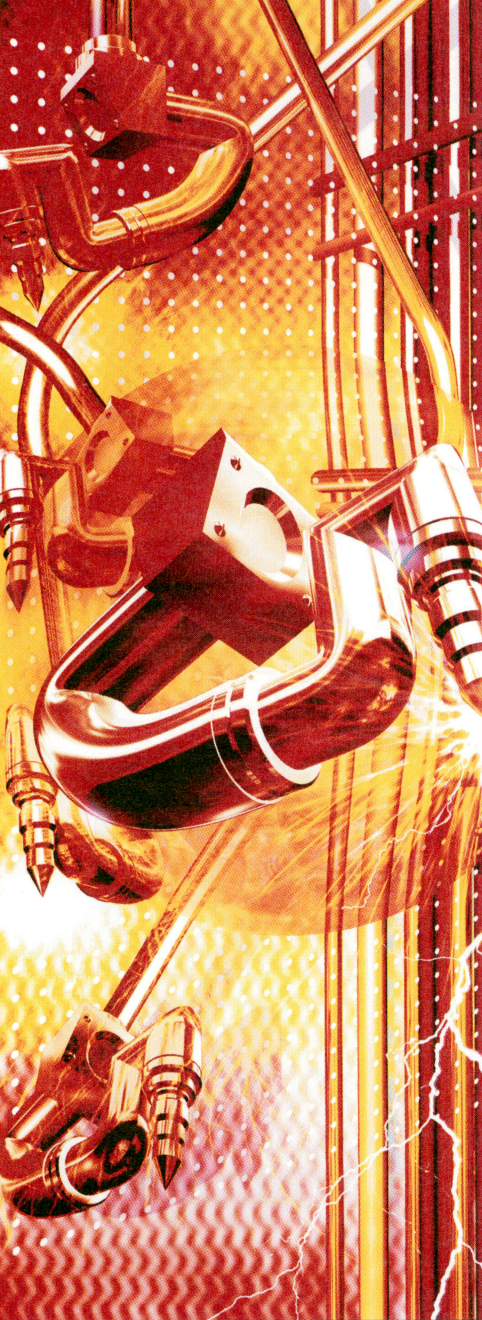
Superb resolution and unrivaled line detail. Edge-to-edge clarity, with virtually no distortion. Glare-free viewing. True-to-life color. These are just a few reasons our FP's are the monitors of choice for people who take their precision seriously. Only from NEC-Mitsubishi, the newly united force of the two leaders in visual display technology. With our combined R&D, engineering and manufacturing power, NEC's LCD leadership and Mitsubishi's patented flat-screen CRT technology, the possibilities are endless. Let's begin.

www.necmitsubishi.com

The MultiSync® FP Series from

NEC / MITSUBISHI
NEC-MITSUBISHI ELECTRONICS DISPLAY

SEE MORE.



The Ultimate **Utility** User Guide

Part I

It doesn't take much to strike terror in the hearts of the average computer user. Picture this: It's just two hours before you present the massive project you've been preparing for months. You're finalizing the details of your Power-Point presentation — importing graphs and adding pictures — when, suddenly, the lights in your building flicker and die. In a matter of seconds the lights return and you quickly press the power button on your Mac.

As you attempt to open your presentation file, blood-curdling screams begin to fill the air. You get the eerie sense that you're on the set of some horrible B movie, when you discover that the screams are yours. Your file refuses to open.

Sounds terrifying doesn't it? There's nothing worse than lost data, and you can lose it in more ways than you can imagine: corrupt directory information, fouled sectors on your hard drive, and viruses only mark the beginning of the end. The only way to counteract potential problems is to attack them ahead of time.

This is the beginning of a two-part series on Macintosh utilities that you can use to keep your Mac merry and your sanity secure. In Part I we'll look at the tools you'll need to keep your disk safe from hard drive disasters and virus infestations. In Part II (in our March 2001 issue) we'll cover backup and firewall software as well utilities

By Jeff Battersby

to beat extension conflicts and clean up the clutter that lives on your hard drive.

Demons of the Disk

Don't let anybody fool you; your hard drive is the most important component in your computer. RAM can be replaced and displays repaired. Heck, you can even move your hard drive from one computer to the next with relative ease. Ease, that is, if the data you've got stored there is in good shape.

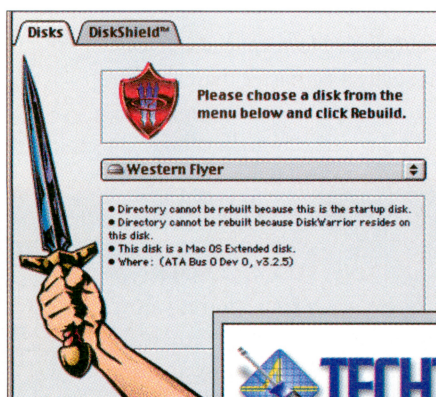
Your Mac's hard disk holds the keys to your digital universe. Your waiting operating system, applications, and most importantly, your precious data live here. If any portion of your hard drive gets corrupted, you stand a chance of losing everything. You'd be wise to protect it while you can.

There are a bevy of utilities on the market to help you maintain the health of your hard drive. You may be using some tools, and there are others that you may not be aware existed. In the end, some combination of all the tools we'll look at will be a necessary piece of your maintenance arsenal. TechTool Pro, Norton Utilities, Norton SystemWorks, and DiskWarrior each provide a number of features that can be used individually or in combination to maintain your hard drive's health.

Damaged Directories

When was the last time you thought about your disk's directory structure? If you answered "never," you wouldn't be alone. Yet, your disk's directory structure is the key to locating information that's stored on your hard drive; essentially it's a map that your computer must use in order to retrieve and store data. The problem is, every time your computer gets shut down improperly or there's a small power blip while you're saving or retrieving a document, you could corrupt your disk's directory information.

TechTool Pro and DiskWarrior are both designed to stay between you and a damaged directory. TechTool Pro performs rudimentary maintenance on your directory, optimizing and repairing it, which helps decrease the time it takes to open files. TechTool provides a graphical view of your disk's directory, giving you



an idea of how fragmented it is. Rebuilding your directory with Tech Tool Pro is as simple as clicking a button.

While TechTool Pro provides basic maintenance, DiskWarrior is a maintenance and repair maven, giving you a double-pronged repair strategy. First, installing DiskWarrior adds an Extension to your System Folder that watches your data as you save and retrieve it, making sure that its location is correctly written to your Mac's directory. DiskWarrior is so efficient in this regard that it virtually guarantees that your data will remain intact. Second, if you do discover that your hard drive has been trashed, you can boot from the DiskWarrior CD and run the DiskWarrior application. The program will scan your directory to verify its integrity, and if it discovers bad or missing information it will "scavenge" your directory to locate and repair lost file data. Once that process is complete, DiskWarrior will create a new, clean directory.

Disk Repair

While it's extremely important, your disk's directory is not the only thing you need to watch after. From time to time you need to check to verify that your hard drive's physical media is in proper working order. To use an antique analogy, your hard disk drive is like a super-fast record player. As your drives get

older with time, the area where data gets written can start to deteriorate and become less capable of storing your data, like a record being worn down. Programs that verify the integrity of your hard drive can check to make sure that your disk is still capable of storing data, and if there are bad sectors on your disk,

mark them as bad so that your Mac doesn't attempt to store information there.

Of all the disk repair utilities, Norton DiskDoctor is probably the best known. As part of Norton Utilities — which is also included in the new, multi-utility Norton System Works — DiskDoctor can find and repair difficult disk prob-

lems. Even if your Mac won't start up, you can use DiskDoctor to scan, verify, and fix your hard drive.

TechTool Pro, while it lacks some of the name recognition of Norton, provides an equally powerful set of tools for locating and repairing hard disk ailments. While the latest version of the program includes a muddled user interface, this application is adept at getting to the bottom of your disk troubles. You can also start your Mac from the TechTool CD, which gives you complete control over your troubled hard drive.

Optimization

As you work from day to day, saving and deleting files, and installing and removing programs, the data on your hard disk can become fragmented. This means that one document or one application can end up being stored in several places on your hard drive, rather than all in one place (even though you'll still see only one file). When data is fragmented, it makes your drive work harder to retrieve the information that's stored there, which also means that it takes more time. If you regularly work with



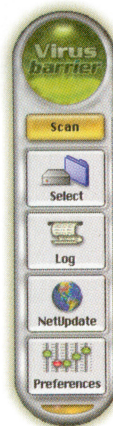
large files, or if you tend to install and remove a lot of software, you should make optimization part of your regular disk maintenance regimen. Once optimized, your files and applications will be stored in a single location, and your drive will work quicker than before.

Also's PlusOptimizer, included on the DiskWarrior CD, Norton SpeedDisk (part of Utilities), and TechTool Pro all provide tools for optimizing the data that's on your hard drive, making your Mac more efficient. Each application works in nearly the same manner,

although Norton SpeedDisk is usually a bit faster than either TechTool Pro or PlusOptimizer. This speed can make a huge difference if you have large amounts of data on your disk.

Virus Protection

There was a time, and it wasn't that long ago, when viruses on your Mac were almost an anomaly. But now, with the cross-platform macro capabilities of programs like Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power-



Point, it's possible to have viruses cross the great divide between Macs and PCs. Where once you could use freeware to protect your Mac, now, if you use any Microsoft Office product and share files with other people, you need industrial strength virus protection — updated regularly — in order to protect your data.

At a minimum, all Microsoft products can now check to see if there are macros (all of which contain code that could be turned into a virus) embedded in the documents that you open. Unfortunately, those macros may also be necessary to use the document that you're opening. If you have to open a file with a macro, it's a guess if your document is loaded with a virus or not. To fully protect yourself, you're going to need a real anti-virus program.

Virex has been a perennial *MacHome* favorite, garnering several *MacHome* awards over the last several years. Virex is a standout because it's fast, efficient, and stays out of the way until an actual virus is detected. Norton AntiVirus, which can be purchased separately or as part of Norton SystemWorks, is also a powerful anti-virus tool, alleviating the guesswork you might face in trying to detect viruses.

Both programs provide you with the ability to directly download virus definition (DAT) files — the information that any anti-virus program needs to detect a virus. If a new virus comes out, this DAT file will have the information needed to inoculate your Mac. Virex requires you to download the files manually while Norton will head out to the Web to grab them automatically. Norton does have a DAT downside though; you have to pay for DAT updates after you've used the program for a year. Virex currently provides them for free as long as you own the program.

The new kid on the anti-virus block is Intego's Virus Barrier. While it isn't nearly as well known as either Norton or Virex, it does provide an impressive set of virus detection tools wrapped in a slick user interface. Virus Barrier includes an automatic update feature and provides support for MS Office macro viruses.

Getting a Grip on What You Need

Flummoxed over what set of tools you actually need to keep your data safe? We understand your pain, and we're here to help you get a grip. There are obviously several options to weigh. How much can you spend? Which tools are really necessary? Do you truly need a virus program? Here's the down-and-dirty.

DiskWarrior, in our opinion, is an absolute necessity. While the program is limited in terms of features — it only optimizes and repairs your disk's directory structure — it's an absolute silver bullet when it comes to repairing deadly disk problems. I take my copy everywhere I go. If you're only going to buy one disk tool, DiskWarrior is the one to get.

If you're willing to spend a little more money, then along with DiskWarrior, we suggest you pick up a copy of TechTool Pro or Norton SystemWorks. Both are comprehensive power tools that will provide excellent optimization and will resolve the majority of your disk problems. And SystemWorks even includes Dantz's Retrospect, an indispensable backup program that we'll cover in Part II next month.

Virus software? Let one rule be your guide; if you're using any Microsoft Office product and you're opening Office files created by anyone but you, get an anti-virus program, and update the DAT

files regularly. Any of the three major programs we mentioned will be more than sufficient. Keep in mind that, currently, Norton AntiVirus is the only that charges you — after you've used the software for a year — for updated DAT files.

Hard disk formatting utilities? Unless you find yourself formatting or partitioning hard drives with some serious regularity, you probably don't need this type of software. But, if you commonly bounce between a number of FireWire or other removable drives, or if you want to set up your own RAID drives, we highly suggest you get a copy of Hard Disk Toolkit. It's the overall best and most flexible disk formatting tool on the market.



Interestingly, TechTool Pro, as of version 3, now provides virus protection features as well. But beware: The program currently includes no protection for Microsoft macro viruses, which are the type of viruses that are most likely to infect your Macintosh.

Formatting Tools

It's pretty rare to have to format a **hard drive**, but it is a task you may encounter on occasion, especially if you're installing a new drive, or if you want to install your system software onto a clean disk. Frankly, the disk tools that came with your Mac are probably more than sufficient for most of your formatting needs. But there may come a time when you want to encrypt a drive to keep private info from prying eyes, or create several partitions of varying formats on a single disk, which gives you the option of running Linux from a separate partition on your Mac. (Partitioning your hard drive makes your Mac think that

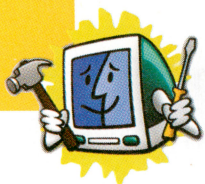
Beware: The program currently includes **no protection** for Microsoft macro viruses, which are the type of viruses that are **most likely to infect your Macintosh**

you have two or more hard drives, depending on the number of partitions that you create.) If you do, then you'll need a dedicated disk formatting utility like Hard Disk Toolkit or Storage Master. Both programs provide standard formatting capabilities, allowing you to format and partition your hard drives and even make it possible to encrypt single partitions or entire drives. Hard Disk Toolkit even goes a step further, allowing you to create RAID drives, even from a single disk. RAID is an acronym for Redundant Arrays of Independent Disks. What this means in simple terms is that your Mac saves (or, technically, mirrors) the same information to two

or more places at the same time, redundantly saving your data. (You'll still only see one file.) Instead of saving your files once to one location on your hard drive, Redundancy guarantees that you have a backup of your data every time that you save it on your hard drive. That way, if one drive fails, your information is still saved.

Your mother always told you that prevention was the best medicine; she wasn't wrong. If you're intent on keeping your Mac happy and your data safe, pick up a couple of these utilities and start your Mac on a regular maintenance program. If you do, you can guarantee that your digital life won't be a scream. **MHJ**

Utility Type	Utility Name	Features	Extras	Manufacturer	Price	Company Information
Disk Optimization and Repair	DiskWarrior	Best of breed directory repair utility	Bootable repair CD, includes a copy of PlusOptimizer for hard disk optimization	Alsoft	\$69	800-257-6381 www.alssoft.com
Disk Optimization and Repair	Norton Utilities	Defacto standard for hard disk optimization and maintenance	Bootable repair CD	Symantec	\$99	408-253-9600 www.symantec.com
Disk Optimization and Repair	TechTool Pro	The best set of hard disk maintenance and optimization tools	Bootable repair CD, includes literally dozens (34 to be exact) of other useful system utilities as well as rudimentary virus protection	Micromat	\$99	800-829-6227 www.micromat.com
Disk Optimization and Repair	Norton System-Works	Comprehensive set of System Utilities	Bootable repair CD, also includes Norton Utilities, Antivirus, Aladdin Spring Cleaning and Retrospect Express Backup	Symantec	\$129	408-253-9600 www.symantec.com
Formatting Tool	Hard Disk Toolkit	Hard Disk formatting and partitioning	Support for RAID and firewire drives, data/hard disk encryption	FWB Software	\$50	408-969-8620 www.fwb.com
Formatting Tool	Storage Master	Hard Disk formatting and partitioning	Volume encryption and formatting support for Linux drives	Radiallogic	\$90	408-253-9600 www.radiallogic.com
Virus Protection	Virex	Best, least intrusive virus protection program	No charge for updated virus definition files	Network Associates	\$45	408-988-3832 www.mcafee.com
Virus Protection	Virus Barrier	Standard virus protection program	Can check for virus definition files and application updates from w/in the program	Intego	\$60	305-868-7920 www.intego.com
Virus Protection	Norton AntiVirus	Defacto standard for virus detection and eradication	Automatically updates virus definition files	Symantec	\$70	408-253-9600 www.symantec.com



The Mac Workshop

By Zack Stern

Share Broadband with AirPort

You've got a couple of Macs, a couple of people who want to go online at the same time, and only one hooked up to the Internet. You could take turns, but why not surf at the same moment? The easiest way to get multiple Macs revved for simultaneous 'Net access is through Apple's own wireless AirPort. While you can adapt these steps for an analog modem, this process works best with a broadband (DSL or cable) connection because your speed will be divided between the connected computers, and with a high-speed connection, there's enough bandwidth to go around.



First You Need to Install Your AirPort Cards.

Remove the batteries from your portables, and unplug your laptop and desktop computers.

For iBooks and PowerBooks, slide the two tabs at the top of the keyboard down (towards the space bar), and roll the keyboard onto the trackpad. Remove the iMac adapter, which is connected to the AirPort card and looks like a green circuit board. Then slip the card into the slot underneath where the keyboard had rested, connect the antenna, and close the keyboard back up.

iMac installation requires you to set the iMac monitor-side down—first place a towel on your desk to protect the screen—to access the upgrade compartment. Make sure that the iMac adapter is connected (the card should have come with this installed), and after unscrewing and opening the door, slide the card into the computer. Connect the antenna and close it up.

For G4s, open the side door, and slip the card (without the green adapter) into its slot. Connect the antenna and close the computer.

What You'll Need

1. AirPort-ready Macs (recent iMacs, PowerBooks, and G4s, and all iBooks). One of them should be set-up online
2. An AirPort card for each computer
3. A Base Station (optional, but stylish and simple)



Hook it Together

Plug the Base Station into your cable modem or DSL modem. If you want to work without a Base Station, continue with these tips, but click "Set up your computer to be an AirPort Software Base Station" in the next step. (Note that your Software Base Station computer will have to be powered-up for any other AirPort-connected computers to get online.)



2

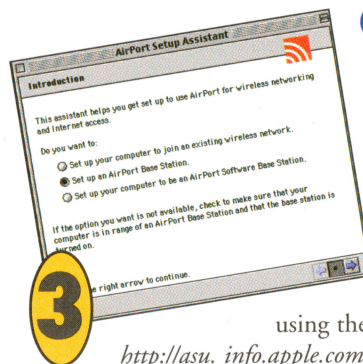
Configure Your Base Station

From the computer that had used the broadband connection, open up the AirPort Setup Assistant. (Make sure that you're

using the latest software by visiting

<http://asu.info.apple.com/>.) Click the radio-button for

"Set up an AirPort Base Station." Follow the quick, on-screen process to configure the Base Station. Your Internet settings from this computer will then be beamed to the Base Station so that it can connect online.



3

Tell us what you think!

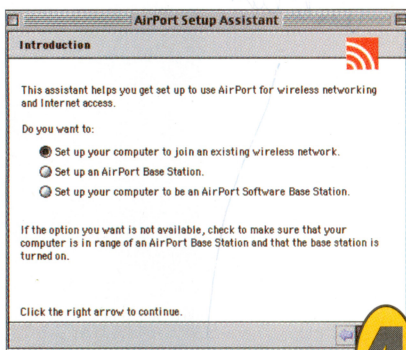
Do you have suggestions for future Mac Workshop articles? Write us a quick note and tell us what you would like to see in upcoming issues! Visit us at:

www.machome.com/febfeedback

Configure Your Macs

Run the AirPort Setup Assistant on both computers, and click "Set up your computer to join an existing wireless network."

After the short setup, you can then connect to the Base Station wirelessly, which in turn is connected online. Now that you're finishing up, you may want to add a password to protect your network with the AirPort Admin Utility and keep others from accessing your computers.



That's it.

All of the computers (why stop with two?) will share the same connection, which will be divided by the Base Station. Now everyone can go online, and they can do it wirelessly, too. And when your AirPort-equipped friends come over, they can be online with AirPort in a matter of moments.

Hardware Options

Apple's AirPort uses a wireless networking standard called 802.11 for which other companies have already developed products. You can even use your AirPort Base Station and a PC together with an 802.11 card. For Mac portables that pre-date the AirPort revolution, Farallon, TechWorks, and Lucent sell PC cards that will let you join the wireless party. These companies even sell competitors to Apple's Base Station that may suit your needs.

802.11 Wireless Companies

Apple

800-692-7753

www.apple.com/airport

Farallon

510-346-8001

www.farallon.com

TechWorks

800-933-6113

www.techworks.com

Lucent Technologies

508-424-3708

www.wavelan.com

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By Chris McVeigh

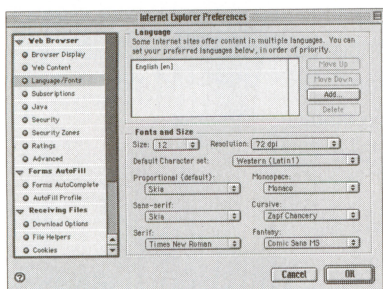
was 16 size
96 dpi resolution

A Better View with IE5

Although Internet Explorer 5 is a finely crafted browser, it has an odd quirk: Microsoft has preprogrammed the software to enlarge online text. The company's motives are certainly admirable. As displays have increased in resolution, the onscreen dimensions of 12-point text have steadily decreased, and so inflating the text size ensures legibility. Unfortunately, many designers continue to create Web sites around the 12-point font standard. Such sites viewed through Internet Explorer 5 display unreasonably large text that, in some cases, encroaches upon the site's interface. The result is often a visual mess.

Thankfully, there's a rather simple fix.

Launch Internet Explorer 5, and select Preferences from the Edit menu. From the new window, select Language and Fonts, the third option at the left. Midway down the new choices on the right, you'll see pop-up menus titled Font Size and Resolution. To restore traditional proportions to IE5, simply select 12 from the Font Size menu and 72dpi from Resolution menu.

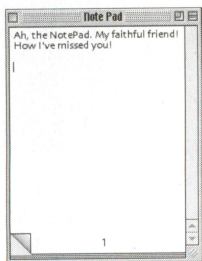


This action reduces the visible size of all text in your browser window. To enhance legibility at this smaller size, you may want to choose a different proportional-width font. Mac OS 9 users should select Skia from the Proportional (default) popup menu. Skia is easy on the eyes and eminently readable when used with Font Smoothing. (This option, found in the Appearance control panel, is turned on by default in Mac OS 9.)

So what happens now if you come across a site with text so small it is illegible? Internet Explorer 5 intelligently allows you to scale the font size as required. To enlarge all fonts within a browser window, press command-(+). The more you press this key combination, the larger the font is displayed. To return the fonts to their original size, simply press command-(-). The feature enlarges and reduces fonts on a window-by-window basis, and does not alter your overall font preferences.

Where's the Note Pad?

The Note Pad has long been a favorite utility of Mac users. Quickly accessible via the Apple Menu, it's a great place to jot down simple notes, such as addresses and telephone numbers. After installing Mac OS 9 or purchasing a new Macintosh, however, users no longer find the Note Pad in the Apple Menu. In what is surely a plot by mysterious forces inside Apple to encourage a switch to Stickies, the Note Pad has been relegated to Apple Extras folder. As luck would have it, you can return things to normal by simply dragging the Note Pad application into the System Folder



and dropping it into the Apple Menu items folder, where it rightly belongs.

Chatting Quietly Online

Blip. Baloopaloop. Uh-oh. Blip. Baloopaloop. Uh-oh. Ah, the pleasant sounds of modern chat applications, such as AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) and ICQ. The sound effects are cute at first, but over time, they begin to wear thin on the nerves. Thankfully, there's a simple way to curb each application's noise-making without muting your Macintosh.

AOL Instant Messenger users should launch the application and select Preferences from the Edit menu. A new window appears, listing a set of options at the left. Select Actions from this list to alter the application's sound options. (In AIM, the sound preferences are interestingly referred to as actions.) To turn off a sound that you find particularly grating, click on the action name and select None from the Sound pop-up menu at the base of the window. You might want to turn off the repeating sound that plays when you sign on, especially if you have a dial-up connection to the Internet. Other action sounds you might want to turn off include Signed On, Signing Off, Sending a Message, and perhaps even Message Arrives. Keep a sound active for New Message Arrives, however, so you'll hear when someone initiates a chat with you. Once you're finished deselecting sounds, click OK.

ICQ users should launch the application and select Preferences from the File menu. A new window appears, listing

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<http://guide.apple.com/usindex.html>

Chatting Online (continued)

a set of options at the left. Select Alert Sounds from this list to bring up the application's sound options at the right. Those of you having nightmares about the high-pitched Uh-oh that plays each time a message arrives might just want to turn off alert sounds completely by unchecking Enable Sound Alerts, the top option. More adventuresome users can skip down to the Sounds listing and select different noises for message arrival. ICQ offers significantly more sounds than does AOL Instant Messenger, but all of them are equally annoying (select "Nanana" as the default alert sound if you doubt these words). Once you're finished, click Save and close the window.

You're all set now to enjoy quiet chatting. Just be sure to keep a watchful eye (instead of an ear) for incoming messages while you're using other applications. Your friends and colleagues may think you're ignoring them if you do not respond to their notes!

Mac OS Update Watch

Automatic Update Software 1.2

This latest revision promises quicker and more efficient updating over the Internet. The software requires Mac OS 9 and can be found at <http://asu.info.apple.com/swupdates.nsf/artnum/n11862>.

Apple Modem Updater 2.0

This software updates the modem firmware in iMacs, iBooks, Blue G3s and all G4s, and PowerBook G3s. Apple warns that while the reported connection rate may be somewhat lower than you might have seen before the installation, actual modem throughput is at least as good or better. You can find the update at <http://asu.info.apple.com/swupdates.nsf/artnum/n11859>.

PowerBook Firmware Update 2.7

This update includes improved support for FireWire. The software requires a PowerBook with built-in FireWire ports running Mac OS 9. You can download the update from <http://asu.info.apple.com/swupdates.nsf/artnum/n11849>.

Mac OS Runtime for Java 2.2.3

Apple's latest update to its Java virtual engine fixes numerous bugs, requires less memory, and includes an intelligent cache manager. Users who rely on Mac OS Runtime for Java should download and install this software. It requires Mac OS 8.1 and can be found at <http://asu.info.apple.com/swupdates.nsf/artnum/n11572>.

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Routers, and we don't mean Power Tools

What are they and why would you want one?

You can't miss the marketers' message, DSL and cable are the hottest things since sliced bread, and you'd better order one today if you want access to all the bandwidth-intensive media on the Internet.

But beyond the simple act of getting a DSL or cable (broadband) connection in your home or office — a rather daunting task in some areas — there are a world of possibilities that you should be aware of to get the most out of your connection.

Let's begin by making an assumption: That you have a broadband connection into your home or office, which is attached to the appropriate modem — supplied by your ISP. From the modem there is an Ethernet jack available to connect your Mac via a 10/100Base-T line. Instead of attaching your Mac to the Ethernet connection, try connecting that Ethernet cable to a router, so that you can connect multiple Macs to the Internet simultaneously.

By Ross Tibbits

Router

Technically speaking, a router is the connection point between two networks: the Wide Area Network (WAN), what you know as the Internet, that makes up the DSL infrastructure outside your home, and your personal network, which will become your Local Area Network (LAN). Routers allow you to connect up to as many as 252 computers to one DSL line, if you have the appropriate number of router connections.

When you attach a router to your modem, your router will be assigned an ISP number such as 123.456.789.1. These digits create the address with which the WAN will recognize your LAN. Within your LAN, individual computers are given unique numbers as well, like 192.168.0.1, 192.168.0.2, and so on, according to the number of computers that you have connected.

The router takes all the data, both incoming and outgoing, and

manages it in what are called

packets. These small

pieces of information are distributed

throughout the network in the most efficient manner possible.

You can attach Macs and PCs to the router making it the perfect device for a small office that is using a combination of platforms. Imagine having visiting clients or guests hook-up their laptops and accessing your network with only minimal set-up time and no compatibility issues. Furthermore, you can connect a printer to the router that will act as a centralized printer for all the computers connected to your network.

Connecting your computers to the router is a relatively simple procedure. You'll need to purchase some Ethernet cable from your local hardware or computer store. It's not expensive, and you can buy it in pre-cut lengths, or in bulk. When you measure out specific lengths, you'll then crimp the plug-ends onto the cable. This isn't difficult, and it will make the LAN neater when the cables are the correct length.

Networking Appliance

You can choose from a variety of reasonably priced routers



at your local computer store. Here are three that are moderately priced and offer a handful of features that may be just what your small office/home office needs.

UGate-3200

The UGate-3200 is one of the most expandable routers. On the back panel you'll find it has an input for your Ethernet, seven 10/100 Base-T ports, and an additional uplink port in case you need to add additional routers to add more computers to the network.

The front panel lights of the router displays its status, power, WAN link, as well as the activity of each Ethernet connection. Although these are nice touches, you will know soon enough if your connection has failed — making lights redundant — and it is also unlikely that the router would be observed on a regular basis.

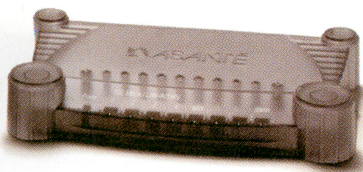
Another feature you'll get with the 3200 is firewall protection. Firewalls guard your network from being tampered with by outsiders with suspicious motives.

UGate makes getting started with a domain name easy by providing a domain name hosting service for free. This allows you to give yourself or your business a .com domain name and instant recognition the world over. If you were to obtain a .com name, you'd likely have a Website, requiring a server with which you'd manage the traffic to and from your site.

\$300, MaxGate
www.maxgate.net
800-284-8985

FriendlyNet Router

Asante's router can be mounted onto a wall with either pair of mounting brackets built-in to its enclosure. If you need expandability, additional units can be stacked on top. It has a WAN port, four Ethernet ports for your network, and it sports a separate printer port so that you



Double Your Desktop

Connecting two monitors to your Desktop G3 and G4 Macs

You might think that someone with two monitors connected to their Mac is a complete geek. After all, many of the people using this setup are either video editors or graphic designers. Believe it or not, even many of the editors at MacHome use two monitors on a regular basis.

Although this hardware may seem excessive, if you are at your computer all day, constantly running a handful of different programs, a pair of monitors can make your life a lot easier. Imagine having one application window open all the time on one monitor, such as your word processing program, and then using the other monitor for email, and Web browsing. This way you won't have to always close out of one program to visit another — simplifying your life.

The second benefit to dual monitors is the ability to mirror one monitor onto another, so that everything you see on one monitor, you'll see on the other monitor as well. This is particularly useful for small meetings and educational forums in the classroom when demonstrating software or giving presentations.

Getting Started

It's easy to upgrade your Mac to accept a pair of monitors. First of all, you'll need to purchase an additional graphics card to plug the second monitor into. These can be found from between \$150 and \$350 — depending on the performance and features you choose. Next, you'll need to find a second monitor — which you

might just have lying around the home or office. If you don't, try looking into a used monitor, or possibly purchasing a relatively inexpensive one.

Hook it Up

Once you have a second monitor and video card, the installation



process is straightforward. Follow the manuals that shipped with your card to see how to drop the new video card in, and install the software. To access all the goodies of your new monitor, open the Monitors Control Panel. Once inside, press the Arrange button to finish the setup. In the new window with the monitor symbols in it, move the pictures until they correspond with your actual monitors (placing the

Video Card Resources

ATI Technologies Inc.
www.ati.com, 905-882-2600

3dfx
www.3dfx.com, 888-367-3339

KVM Switch

Belkin
www.belkin.com, 800-223-5546

don't have to give up an Ethernet port to connect to your printer.

\$185, Asante Technologies, Inc.
www.asante.com
800-566-6680

Xrouter Pro

What stands out about the Xrouter is that the manual is completely Mac-friendly. This well-written documentation even includes a glossary in the

appendix. You'll also find an Ethernet cable in the box to get you started.

You'll find a WAN slot on the back of

this router and four LAN slots.

If you need to expand your LAN, you can use the uplink port (slot number four) to connect two Xrouters together.

\$180, Macsense Connectivity Inc.

www.macsense.com
408-844-0320 MHJ



AirStation

AirStation, developed by TechWorks, is a wireless Internet sharing device that performs best when connected to a pre-existing LAN

— but it is also a standalone router for up to three devices. Simply connect it to your router, and

AirStation allows wireless Macs and PCs to

access the LAN using the same standard as Apple's AirPort. For a few extra dollars, wireless expansion will let you add computer stations without the need for all of the wiring, which is great for large open rooms.

\$280, TechWorks, Inc.

www.techworks.com
800-688-7466

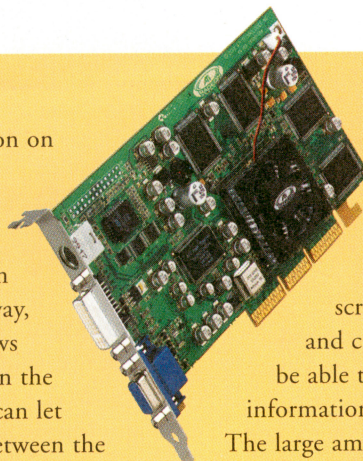


second monitor icon on the right of the first, if that's how you positioned them on your desk). That way, the computer knows their relationship in the real world, and it can let the mouse track between the two seamlessly. Now you've got twice as much breathing room.

Performance Improvements

If you purchase a new graphics card, you'll find that they come in a variety of memory configurations.

That is, you can buy cards with 16MB or 32MB of RAM. This



extra space lets you increase the resolution settings on your monitor, so the images on the screen will be sharper and crisper, and you will be able to fit more icons and information on your screen.

The large amount of memory is particularly important to those of you who play a lot of games on your Mac — Quake III and Falcon 4.0, for instance. Because the graphics card has its own memory, it can take over the task of displaying high-level 2D and 3D graphics, building textures and rendering shapes. This room also stores the textures, the wallpaper of 3D

games. These functions allow your Mac's CPU to attend to other matters, which means that your Mac games will fly.

If games are not your thing, but graphic design is, you'll be pleased to know that many of these cards have the memory that you'll need for high quality graphics, and the expandability you'll need for high quality monitors. Specifically, you can purchase these cards with both analog (VGA) and digital (DVI-I) monitor inputs. Many of today's

high-end flat panel and flat screen monitors come with both inputs. (New Apple monitors will need an adapter.)

Once you install a second monitor you might ask yourself how you ever

managed to live without two screens on your desk. Although they can take-up a lot of desk space, you'll be rewarded by the performance and flexibility that they offer for years to come. MHJ

Connecting two Macs to one monitor

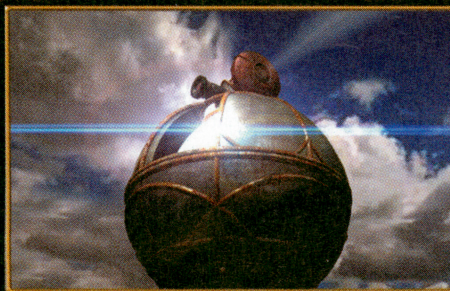
For most, simply using one computer with one or two monitors is quite sufficient. Often though, there are circumstances in which individuals would like to have access to two Macs (or a Mac and a PC), but without the hassle of constantly switching the monitor, mouse, and keyboard connections between the two units.

This is where a nifty device called a KVM switch can be really helpful. By simply attaching one monitor, keyboard, and mouse to it, you can connect the Mac CPUs into the device and have access to each at the flip of a switch. Prices range from about \$70 to \$130.



MYST III EXILE

The Story of Myst Continues

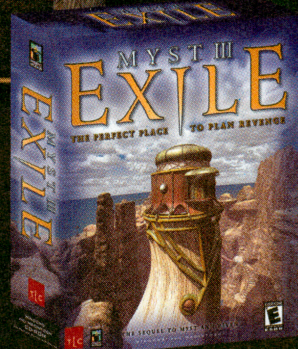


THE SEQUEL TO MYST AND RIVEN
COMING APRIL 2001

DEVELOPED BY



WWW.MYST3.COM



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Flash 5 Vs. LiveMotion

Searching for the Best in Web Animation

You knew it was bound to happen. In fact, the writing has been on the wall for quite some time now. Adobe has released a couple of products over the last year or so that are designed to make inroads into some pretty well secured territory. First, it was InDesign, the page layout program with serious intentions of knocking Quark off the desktop publishing map.

And now, with the release of Adobe LiveMotion, Adobe is looking to unseat Flash as the king of the Web-animation world. Removing Flash from the top of the heap may prove to be no easy task for LiveMotion. Macromedia has recently released version 5 of the powerful animation tool, making it easier than ever to create just about any type of Web content.

Take a look anywhere on the Web and it's pretty obvious that when people are creating animation on the Web, they're doing it with Flash. With this in mind, Adobe didn't fool around when they created LiveMotion. While it's common in the computer world for companies to come up with their own file formats for the documents you create with their programs, Adobe knew that if they were going to bring animation to the Web, they were going to

have to stick with a common format.

Since Flash is clearly the standard format for animation on the Web, LiveMotion is designed to create Flash-formatted animations (SWF files) for the Web.

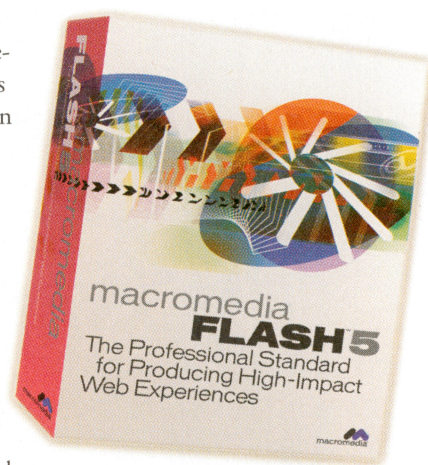
Initially, when you open the programs, there appears to be very little difference between the two user interfaces. Much to Adobe's chagrin, Macromedia has adopted the tabbed-palette interface common to all Adobe products. (Adobe has taken note of this and has a lawsuit pending.) Like LiveMotion, the latest version of Flash allows you to drag tabs from one palette to another, but outdoes LiveMotion (and every other Adobe product) by allowing you to save your customized palettes, so you can create specific tool groups for specific jobs.

Creating drawings in LiveMotion is a snap. Rather than simply being an animation tool, it's actually a complete

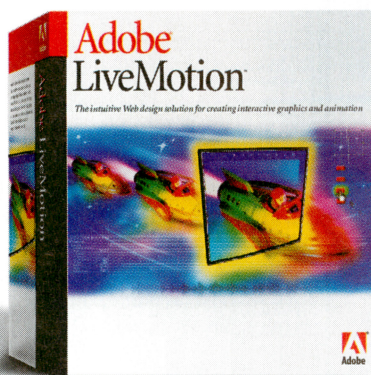
drawing product, allowing you to create rollover buttons and Web navigation interfaces; features that require Flash users to purchase Illustrator or Fireworks to create.

As you might expect, LiveMotion makes it easy to edit Photoshop images right from within the program. Drawing objects in LiveMotion is as simple and intuitive as any of Adobe's other major drawing programs. Using these tools you can create a circle and then use a pen selection tool to grab and drag your circle's edges to conform to any shape you choose. Flash simply doesn't have drawing tools that are this powerful, although the program does include a new Bezier tool, which allows you to create more intricate hand-drawn objects.

Interestingly, when it comes to text, Flash takes the cake. Creating a text box in any Flash animation is as simple as dragging a text box on your drawing and typing text within the box. Once you've created your text you only need to select it and then make changes using the Text palettes. Color, paragraph alignment and fonts can all be changed from the palettes like any other standard drawing



By Jeff Battersby



object. By contrast, LiveMotion uses an infuriatingly irritating dialog box that pops up in front of your document. In this box you choose the font, style and alignment.

If you want to edit the text again, you'll have to navigate the dialog box again — a rather non-intuitive interface that Adobe should do away with.

Animation is the hallmark of these two programs and they both do a stellar job. LiveMotion has a great timeline feature making it possible to create animations in a flash — no pun intended. LiveMotion uses a simple interface that's similar to the interface in Adobe After Effects. Animation in LiveMotion is as simple as selecting a drawing object in the timeline window, marking a spot on the timeline where you want the animation to begin, then marking the endpoint and dragging you object to where you want it to appear at the end of the animation. LiveMotion handles all the points in between. As soon as you're done, you simply need to export your animation and you have a Web-ready SWF file.

While Flash's animation tools aren't nearly as easy to use, they're far more robust. To animate an object in Flash you first need to select the object you want to animate, then you open the Insert menu and Create a Motion Tween. You then select the point in your timeline where you want the animation to end, and move your drawing object to where you want it to appear. Also, as a fly in the ointment, when you're creating animations in Flash your drawing objects need to be changed to what Flash refers to as Symbols. Once your object is converted it can then be used as an animation object. This is nowhere as simple as LiveMotion, which allows you to simply animate any drawing object on your screen without any changes necessary.

Where Flash's animation tools excel is with ActionScript. This java-like scripting language allows you to take minute control over all of the objects in your animation.

LiveMotion has nothing to compare with this scripting language, pushing Flash light years ahead of LiveMotion in terms of flexibility and capability. Flash also allows you to save objects in shared libraries, which means that you can create an object one time, animate it and then use it over and over again. This is a great tool, especially if you're doing your animation work in a collaborative environment.

Both LiveMotion and Flash are extraordinarily complicated programs and as such, require a significant amount of effort to master. When it comes to tutorials, manuals and basic information on how to use each program, Flash is a complete standout. The program sports several useful manuals and an incredibly easy tutorial that's built into the Help menu of the Flash application. Flash's tutorials give you a detailed walk through the majority of Flash's major features, helping you to see exactly how each portion of the program works. If you want more detailed information you can easily dig it out of one of the manuals.

LiveMotion's learning tools are abysmal. While it can be argued that PDF-based manuals save trees, they're nearly useless when you have to bounce between the PDF file and the tutorial document that you're attempting to create. (In fact, I often end up printing them; killing the trees assumed saved in the process.) What makes LiveMotion tutorials a real horror is the fact that they are designed for users of the Windows version of LiveMotion. In fact, they were so Windows-oriented that, when they make mention of key combinations for performing specific tasks, there are no

references to the Mac command-key combinations. While it's understandable that documentation and manuals can only have screen shots from one version of an application, learning tools that lack references to all possible platforms end up being absolutely useless.

The Final Decision LiveMotion, with the exception of its lack of good documentation, stands out as an excellent choice for animators new to Web content creation. Exceptional drawing tools, easy animation techniques and the ability to create standard drawing objects make LiveMotion a program that is very versatile and ultimately very powerful and easy to use. But in the end, Flash is still the king of the hill. While it lacks some of the drawing refinement of LiveMotion, it handles text in a far more intuitive manner and the fact that the user interface can be customized to suit you specific needs makes it very flexible from a user perspective. Finally, the fact that Flash provides a powerful scripting language for refined control of your animation objects, makes Flash the clear winner if you want to create intricate, interactive animations. **MHJ**

rating ★★★★★

Flash 5
\$390, Macromedia
www.macromedia.com
415-252-2000

👍 Web animation standard, powerful scripting language, excellent reference tools

👎 Too many steps necessary to create simple animations

rating ★★★★

LiveMotion
\$299, Adobe Systems
www.adobe.com
800-833-6687

👍 Great introductory Web animation tool, excellent drawing tools, easy to create simple animations

👎 Abysmal documentation and tutorials, irritating text handling tool

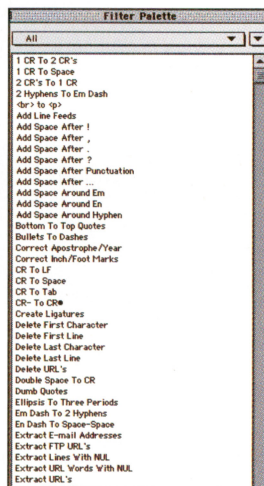
TextSpresso 1.7

If you have ever tried to clean-up email text sent from a PC or forwarded to you by a friend, you know just how cluttered text becomes with >>, %20, and even - - symbols appearing in every open space. Physically removing them is a tedious, time-consuming chore, which is why the shareware program, TextSpresso, is so valuable.

With TextSpresso you can easily apply numerous filters to email text to remove annoying characters that clutter up your page. It's a well designed, powerful and yet simple to use program. It allows you to create custom filters to suit your individual needs. By simply selecting an entire email message, or any portion therein, and copying it to your clipboard, you can then open TextSpresso and paste it into a new file for filtering.

Begin by applying the Extract email addresses, or the Strip > And < filters to

your text, and you'll have it looking clean and ready to paste into a document in an instant. You'll find a tremendous array of filters for everything from PC to Macs and PC to Web — if you want to drop text directly into your Website authoring program. Imagine never having to go through fifty lines of text to remove those >> symbols! If there are a series of filters you typically find useful, you can create filter sets to use regularly. Better yet, you can drag and drop a series of email messages en-masse into a TextSpresso file and filter them all at once. This is also possible with the Batch Documents tool. Try simply using the New (Clipboard) function and watch as the material in your clipboard is automatically included into a new document.



The Final Decision TextSpresso is an invaluable tool for cleaning-up email messages as you incorporate them into word processing documents or Web pages. In seconds, the numerous filters allow you to remove any extraneous characters from emails you want to use elsewhere. The variety of tools developed for gathering your text will leave you pleased that you discovered

this shareware program.

— Ross Tibbits

rating ★★★★★

\$29, Taylor Design
www.taylor-design.com
760-949-5808

Excellent for cleaning-up email messages, easy to use, saves time

None

NEC MultiSync FP1350X

If you are interested in a monitor that meets your high-end professional needs as a graphic artist, architect, photographer, or Web guru, take a look at the NEC MultiSync FP 1350X. This generous yet relatively compact 22-inch monitor (20-inch viewable) has the quality and features that will have you grinning every time you use it. Be careful lifting it though, at over 71 pounds, it's no lightweight.

The well-written instruction manual will guide you easily through the set-up process — there are even Mac-specific



diagrams. When you turn-on the monitor for the first time, you'll want to use the well-designed control panel to insure that your settings are just right. There are plenty to choose from, including:

brightness, contrast, various size and position controls, RGB, and tools like Moiré canceller.

This monitor supports both analog and digital inputs for those of you who have newer Macs or have installed a new video card into your PCI slot. If you are using an analog connection,

you'll see resolution settings that range from 640 x 480 at 60-160 Hz to as high as 1,920 x 1,440 at 60-160Hz. The 1,280 x 1,024 at 85Hz. setting was great and won't strain your eyes. But because digital technology is relatively new, it will only allow for resolution setting as high as 1,600 x 1,200 at

60Hz. That's not a roadblock for most users, though. What you will notice with a direct digital connection is a cleaner signal between the monitor and your Mac that creates a sharper and crisper image on the screen.

The Final Decision Working with this monitor on a daily basis you'll be struck by its size and clarity. There isn't a square inch on the screen that is blurry or out of focus. The availability of both analog and digital inputs makes it versatile and will meet the needs of the discerning professional.

— Ross Tibbits

rating ★★★★★

\$999, NEC-Mitsubishi, Inc.
888-632-6487
www.necmitsubishi.com

Remarkably focused screen, great color, full featured, digital and analog inputs

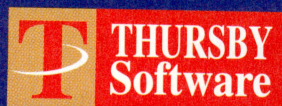
Not a thing

Come see us at
Macworld Expo booth #2211!



MacSOHO?TM It rocks!

If your small office has a Mac and PC that need to share files, then you need MacSOHO, from Thursby Software. MacSOHO is the easiest, most cost effective way for your Macs and PCs to become best friends. It's fast, really fast, and secure and it's so simple to use and easy to install on your Macintosh, you'll think it rocks! MacSOHO, the perfect solution for your home or small office. Download a free evaluation today.



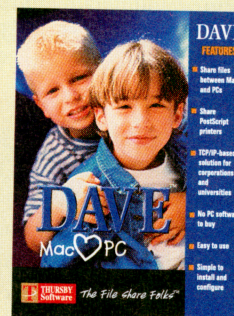
The File Share FolksTM

www.thursby.com

THURSBY SOFTWARE has the
perfect file share solution to
meet your needs.



The ideal solution for the
small office where Macs &
PCs need to share files.



The fast, easy way to share
files and printers between
PCs and Macintosh systems.



Achieve true NFS connecti-
ty between your Mac and
UNIX systems.



Windows users can access
files on any Mac workstation
or AppleShare server.

Nisus Writer 6.0

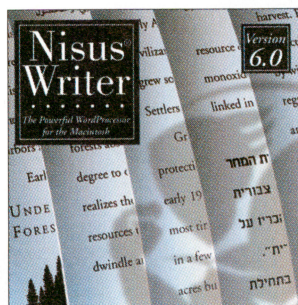
Macintosh users are used to a certain degree of non-conformity with the rest of the computer world, but this doesn't necessarily apply to word processor applications, where Microsoft's strength in the market has created virtual standardization. Nisus Writer 6.0 is more than an alternative for those who are looking for a different environment. It's been designed to raise the bar for ease-of-use in editing and document formatting. And for those who create documents in different languages, Nisus Writer is a godsend, eliminating the need for separate, expensive foreign language versions.

Anyone who uses word processors on a regular basis will appreciate the way Nisus Writer's features, once learned, become quick and intuitive. Nisus Writer has designed its tools for experienced or professional hands. Easily applied styles, a powerful find/replace

function and an excellent thesaurus are some of the features that become increasingly valuable with repeated use. Version 6.0 has added a Text Analyzer Tool for indexing and editing along with expanded glossary functions.

Foreign language capability is where Nisus Writer really shines. The ability to create documents in two or more different languages without changing applications has given Nisus a loyal following, even among users in Arabic and Japanese. The appropriate dictionaries and tools are simply loaded from the accompanying CD-ROM.

The Final Decision For all the credit Nisus deserves in its thoughtful design, there is no ignoring the equity Microsoft has built as a cross-platform *lingua franca* for so many businesses and individuals. Nisus Writer cannot read documents in



Microsoft Word 98 or 2001 unless they've been converted to text, while Word only reads Nisus documents as text, without formatting. This means an extra step is required to work with

outside files and it may be a serious consideration for anyone who exchanges electronic files on a regular basis. For the many serious users who will appreciate the quality of Nisus Writer 6.0's features, however, this extra effort is more than justified.

— James Malcolmson

rating ★★★★★

\$100, Nisus Software, Inc.
www.nisus.com
800-890-3030

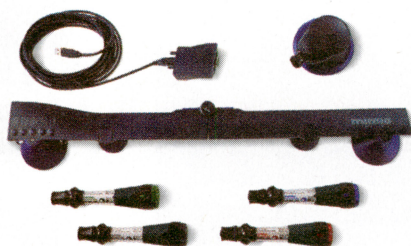
Excellent multilingual capabilities, practical editing

Cannot read later versions of Word

Mimio

Remember all the times you were in meetings or classrooms when you wish you'd taken better notes? Have you ever hoped that you could just have a copy of what was written on the whiteboard instead of having to write it yourself? Now you can have that and more, with a product called Mimio.

The Mimio captures what is written on a whiteboard through a series of electronic sensors so that you can view, edit, and save files of individual whiteboard sessions on your Mac. As you write on the whiteboard, you'll see the exact same text and imagery appear in real-time on the screen of your Mac. On occasion, por-



tions of letters were not transcribed, but this has primarily to do with getting used to using the devices correctly.

All this magic is possible through a bar-like device that mounts onto the edge of your whiteboard with two large suction cups. By sensing the location of one of the four specially designed pen holders (red, green, blue, and black), it sends information through a 12 foot long USB cable (supplied) to the software on your Mac. Simply load the pens and software, mount the bracket and you are ready to transcribe valuable notes with Mimio.

The Mimio software's main page mirrors the whiteboard exactly — you can even adjust for a variety of different sized boards. When you've filled the whiteboard with text, simply save it as a file to your Mac and then erase the board and start another session. Individual files can

be saved in HTML format also. You can compile these sessions on your hard drive and either use them personally, distribute them via email, or print directly from your monitor. There is also a neat copy and paste feature where you can select an area on the whiteboard from your monitor, copy it, and paste it into a Word document. Better yet, simply drag and drop the text!

The Final Decision For the classroom or the conference room, Mimio is a great communication tool. Its value will certainly outweigh its cost and the minor transcription quirks.

— Ross Tibbits

rating ★★★★★

\$599, Virtual Ink Corp.
www.mimio.com
877-696-4640

Great communication tool, easy to use

Finicky tracking devices

Visor Prism

Old-time Mac users know that color displays aren't everything. The original Macs looked great even with their black-and-white monitors. The new Visor Prism presents a similar aesthetic; a color personal digital assistant (PDA) is nice, but color alone is no reason to upgrade.

PDA's that use the Palm OS, like the Prism, are great managers for your life. Use them to schedule appointments, keep notes, and even use some of the thousands of 3rd-party applications. They're your computer for the road, and they keep everything synchronized with your desktop Mac.

The Visor Prism's feature list is rich, including 8MB RAM to store thousands of contacts, appointments, and messages; a Springboard expansion slot to easily add a GPS receiver, MP3 player, camera, or other hardware tool; a fast processor for sprightly response; and a 65,000-color

capable display which offers slightly improved clarity over monochrome options. These items make the Prism a potent option for first-time PDA shoppers.

A color display is the biggest new addition to this model. The Prism uses color to highlight banners in the datebook and other applications, but the display isn't reason enough to ditch your old PDA. Consider the Prism if you have other reasons to buy a new PDA other than color alone.

The Prism gobbles-down battery power faster than the other Palm OS PDA's, though you'll still manage about six straight hours of use or about two weeks of regular, intermittent use. Instead of disposable power, the Prism sports a rechargeable battery that tops itself off when sitting in the included USB cradle. So you shouldn't have a power shortage unless you're using your



Prism on the road for weeks at a time.

The Final Decision

The Prism's well-rounded features and the color display position this as a top PDA. Color alone isn't cause to toss your old handheld, and if you're interested in dabbling in palm computers, first look at a scaled-down model. But PDaphiles, and new users who are ready to jump head-first into palm computers will get a balanced, capable machine with the Prism.

— Zack Stern

rating ★★★★★

\$450, Handspring, Inc
www.handspring.com
888-565-9393



Nice color, full featured

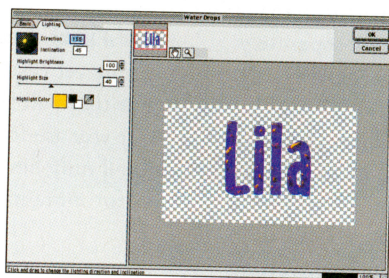


Color isn't utilized enough

Eye Candy 4000

A humdrum logo or dull photograph can sometimes leave even expert designers challenged for inspiration. Hence the popularity of third-party filters, which operate as plug-ins to Photoshop and other graphics programs. Plug-in filters are the most popular way to dance up a boring logo, put a special effect on a photo, or create interesting rollover effects for Website navigational buttons.

One popular entry on that list is Alien Skin's Eye Candy, which has come out with an upgrade called Eye Candy 4000, giving you 23 different filters. This Photoshop plug-in also works with Macromedia Fireworks, Adobe ImageReady, and Deneba Canvas.



The new version gives you a suite of brand new filters, including Marble, Wood, Drip, Melt, and Corona. It includes new features such as a bevel profile and color gradient editors, as well as seamless tiling. This upgrade also consolidates some effects from the older version to streamline the selection process.

Eye Candy 4000 is as simple to use as the previous version, and comes at a very reasonable price. As you launch the filter within Photoshop, the Eye Candy menu replaces the Mac's menu bar on the screen. All controls operate from within a straightforward slider bar interface and tabs. You can easily test out any amount of a particular effect and preview the results before applying it to your image. There are unlimited undos and redos if you

happen to change your mind many, many times.

Eye Candy 4000 comes with a detailed instruction book, which helps you make the most of the program's many capabilities and helps new users decide which filters are right for their images.

The Final Decision Eye Candy is a blast to use, and the faster your machine, the faster the image processing. It gives you literally an infinite number of special effects for every imaginable image.

— Jackie Dove

rating ★★★★★

\$169, Alien Skin Software
888-921-7546
www.alienskin.com



Easy-to-use interface, myriad of effects, unlimited undos, compatible with various programs, reasonable price, printed user guide



None

Travan FireWire 20GB Tape Drive

Backup storage has developed significantly in recent years with the advent of compact storage devices like external hard drives and CD-RWs. Increasingly, allowing you to store incredible amounts of data for less money and in smaller devices. But often, these devices don't offer enough in the way of storage capacity — particularly if you are using them to save or backup large video projects or other memory-intensive files. Tape drives are well suited for this purpose because they are affordable, compact, and durable.

The new Travan FireWire 20GB by Imation is just what you might want in a tape drive. It is compact, FireWire driven (this greatly increases its operational speed), and additional tapes cost about \$34 — not bad for 20GB. Twenty GB refers to the capacity of the tape when

data is compressed using Dantz Retrospect backup software which comes standard with the drive. Retrospect, worth about \$250, is full featured, and allows you to schedule backups at a specific time every day, week, or month so as not to lose track of any data.

The only gripe that we had with the Travan drive was that it made a lot of noise when copying data onto the tape — a constant whirring as the tape and Retrospect perform their tasks. Furthermore, there is no On/Off switch on the back, which requires that you either unplug the drive, or listen to the small cooling fan while at your desk. And despite its FireWire connectivity, it took a very long time to backup data.

External hard drives can be purchased from other manufacturers that do not use tape and cost about the same amount of money, plus they are much quieter. The



benefit of tapes is that you can have a variety of them to store different data on each, unlike a standard hard drive.

The Final Decision

The Travan FireWire 20GB drive is useful if you need the flexibility of tape storage — in video production for instance. It's relatively compact and the cartridges are inexpensive. If it were only quieter and had an On/Off switch.

— Ross Tibbits

rating



\$500, Imation Corp.
www.imation.com
800-466-3456
PowerPC Required



Competitive price, lots of storage capacity

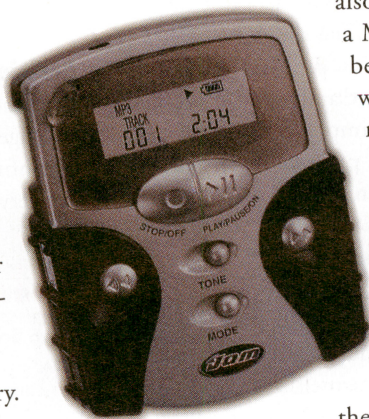


Noisy, no On/Off switch, and slower than expected

Jam-P3

You are probably all too aware of the Napster court battles, in which MP3 tracks were the center of the nation's attention. But MP3 looks like it is here to stay, and we wanted to let you know about the new Jam-P3 player by KB Gear.

Encased in a cool looking, rugged case, this player looks ready for anything. Its five buttons on the front are just the right size to easily locate in a hurry. The largest of them is the Play/Pause/On button, and on either side of it are the Fast Forward and Rewind buttons. The smallest, less frequently used buttons are for Tone and Mode.



Unlike some smaller players, this one sports a large LCD window that displays the track number, available memory, battery level, play mode, as well as indicating mode and tone settings.

The Jam-P3 comes standard with 16MB of internal memory. It also has a slot in its side for a MultimediaCard that can be purchased separately with upwards of 64MB of memory.

The player comes with the well known JamP3 software for downloading tracks from the Internet, converting CD tracks to MP3, and for adding and deleting tracks from the player (via a USB cable).

Once you get the hang of it, it's a breeze creating your own set lists.

By changing the bitrate at which a song is played — either at the time you download, or when you load the

tracks to the player, you can maximize the playtime of the unit. At 32kbps (AM radio quality) you'll get 67 minutes of playtime with the internal memory. But, the CD quality setting (128 kbps), gives you just 17 minutes. There are also incremental settings at 64 and 96 kbps.

The Final Decision The Jam-P3 is a simple yet easy to use and functional unit that will have you jamming wherever you are for not a whole lot of cash. You'll only have to pay — rather dearly — for more memory.

— Ross Tibbits

rating



\$100, KB Gear Interactive
www.kbgear.com
800-926-3066
PowerPC Required



Functional and easy to use design, includes JamP3 software



Requires extra memory

Microsoft Excel 2001

A look at the latest in spreadsheet applications

For many of you, spreadsheets are about as interesting as doing your taxes, whereas for others, they are both a necessary and creative experience. Although Microsoft hasn't changed much Excel in Office 2001, they've made certain that it's easier to use and more intuitive.

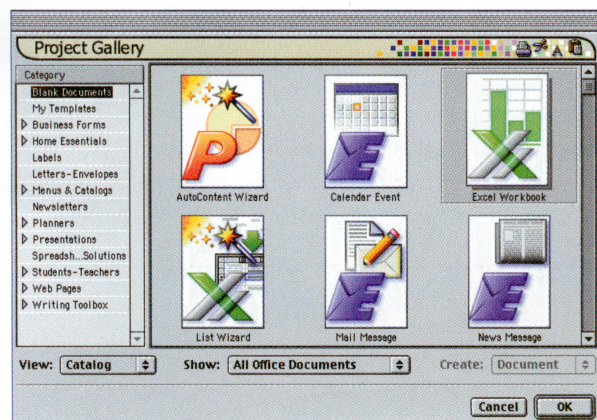
On top of this they have added a few features that you are sure to appreciate. The first thing you'll notice is Excel's new look, consistent with similar changes made in Word, Entourage, and PowerPoint. The toolbars — which are customizable — sit neatly in the upper left hand corner of your screen and are complimented by the new Formatting Palette.

The Formatting Palette quickly lets you select fonts, change spacing and alignment, create borders and shading, and customize document settings at will. This function is a great improvement over the previous version, where you had to search endlessly under various toolbars for these functions.

I found Excel 2001 to be intuitive and easy to use when working with spreadsheets. Excel remembers the numbers and words you've entered in previously and as you type in new data, an AutoComplete window appears near your entry, allowing you to quickly select a piece of data without having to re-enter it.

Drop down menus and auto fill features are also present when you are trying to sort lists within your spreadsheets. Remember when you first tried to do this with previous versions of Excel? It was more a matter of trying to read the manual than using your intuition. Fortunately, it is a matter of intuition in 2001. By selecting all the data within your file and applying the List Wizard to it, you can easily implement a series of powerful tools with which to sort your data. Once you've gone through the three easy steps in the Wizard, Excel creates a series of drop-down menus at the top of each column. Within each menu you'll have the option of sorting your data in ascending or descending order, you can Show All, Show Top 10, or create a Custom Filter. Excel automatically interprets the data and allows you to sort by the name of a particular entry.

By Ross Tibbits



One of the most important Mac-centric tools that Microsoft has incorporated into Excel is the ability to import data from FileMaker Pro. With the help of the FileMaker Pro Import Wizard, you can easily work in Excel with your most important data. Once you have selected the information to import, you can manipulate it just as though it were a regular Excel file, sorting and analyzing at will.

The Final Decision If you have worked with past versions of Excel you will be very pleased with the changes present in Excel 2001. Although not revolutionary in nature, they will certainly make working with this powerful program easier and more intuitive than ever before. **MHJ**

rating ★★★★★

Microsoft Excel 2001
\$399, Microsoft Corporation
www.microsoft.com
800-426-9400

👍 Intuitive functions, useful design layout, easy of use

👎 None

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The Users conference features industry experts offering skill development on the most popular Mac-related tools and professional development courses for users who rely on Apple technology to gain a competitive advantage.

MacBeginnings - San Francisco debut!

After great success this July in New York, MacBeginnings will make it's debut in San Francisco! These high-energy, informative sessions will provide first-time attendees, new and beginning Mac users a starting point to enter the Mac community. MacBeginnings are free and open to **ALL** registered Macworld Conference & Expo attendees!

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Arts and Crafts

Cool Tools For Your Website

Remember when a brand new box of crayons, a fresh pack of coloring paper (with all the colors), or a box of Colorforms was a special treat? As children, many of us loved to play with shapes, colors, layouts, and pictures. Today, creating a Website can invoke much the same artistic excitement and inspiration.

But instead of crayons, coloring pencils, or pastels, some highly evolved electronic art supplies can help establish your Website's visual presence.

In the sampling of art tools below, some are easy to learn while others are deep and complex, requiring steeper learning curves. Depending on your capabilities and interests, as well as your time and budget, you should find all you need right here to create a fabulous Website.

Alphabet Soup: GIF vs. JPEG

If you want to create Web graphics, you'll first need to know about GIFs and JPEGs, the major file formats required by browsers to display images on the Web.

GIFs and JPEGs are compressed graphic files used for different kinds of images. These so-called fast graphics are designed to have smaller file sizes and download quickly.

GIF (Graphic Interchange Format) is generally used for drawings, line art, illustrations, logos, graphical text, and cartoons which contain large blocks of the same color. GIFs can also be animated, creating the compelling moving effects that you often see on Websites and banners. GIFs can be interlaced, which means they appear on the screen gradually without making the viewer wait for the entire download. And GIFs can also be transparent, letting the background color of your Web page show through part of your image, allowing a graphic to sit on top of a plain or patterned background.

GIFs are swift because they hold only 256 colors (also called indexed color or 8-bit color). The more colors your graphic contains, the larger it is, and the longer it takes to



download. GIF is a "lossless" compression scheme because your graphics do not lose information during the translation from their original format.

Photographs and other continuous tone images better as JPEGs (short for Joint Photographic Experts Group) because the compression scheme, which you can adjust for quality, allows for millions of colors. JPEGs compress images by accurately recording the brightness of each pixel while averaging the hues. JPEGs are best used for images with gradual color changes that contain no sharp edges.

Unlike the GIF, JPEG is a "lossy" compression scheme, meaning that it loses information in the translation from the original file format. However, that loss of quality may not be noticeable.

With a JPEG, you are in control. You determine how much information is lost and how much compression a particular photograph can tolerate. If you are posting pictures of the family, for example, you want facial features,

By Jackie Dove

flesh tones, eye sockets and color, and so forth to look natural and unpixelated.

Thus, you may choose less compression and a longer download time for a higher quality image. However, if you are posting landscapes from your vacation, you may want to hasten download time with increased compression.

Be aware that different computer systems, browser versions, monitors, video memory, and other factors, will affect how your image displays.

Pixels vs. Math

While all images appear as pixels on your monitor, not every image is created the same way. There are two kinds of graphics: Raster (pixel-based) and vector (math-based). Changing any element of a raster or pixel-based image (also known as a bitmapped image), requires an image editor or paint program.

Vector files, on the other hand, record images descriptively as geometric shapes. If you are working with vector files from a drawing program, these can be more easily modified and resized without a loss in quality. They also tend to have smaller file sizes, and download quickly.

Now that you've got the handle on file formats, let's look at some programs that can help you produce the best images.

Photo Graphics

Ever since graphical browsers started displaying images, folks have been cramming their Websites full of pictures — the grandkids, the kittens, business products, you name it. Photographs — pixel-based, bitmapped images — are derived from scanning prints or downloading images from a digital camera. Once you have an image in your hard drive, you'll want to crop, edit, color correct, and optimize it for the Web.

The granddaddy of digital imaging aspirants and pros alike is Adobe Photoshop, which has just come out with version 6 (www.adobe.com). While Photoshop generally has a steep learning curve, that's no reason to be put off. It is relatively easy to learn how to prepare digital images for the Web in Photoshop 6. Photoshop 6 retains the versatile Save

Got Help?

Despite the complexity of art tools such as Photoshop and Illustrator, there are many specialized functions that they either don't have or perform only superficially. Enter the world of plug-ins. A plug-in is a small program that enhances the capability of a larger program and only works in conjunction with that program. Some applications function as both plug-ins and standalone programs.

Framed

We all love to put our printed pictures in frames for display. Well, it's no different with Web-based photos, and you can do this interactively, trying out different effects before applying them, with two popular framing programs. Extensis PhotoFrame 2 (www.extensis.com), a Photoshop plug-in for \$200, gives you more than 1,000 professionally designed frames, which you can then customize with special effects such as shadows, glows, textures, and bevels.

Auto F/X's Photo/Graphic Edges 10,000+ (www.autofx.com) for \$200, lets you add torn, ripped, deckled, feathered, painted, film frames, and darkroom styled edges to any image. The program features 17 volumes of effects and more than 10,000 edges including 40 special effects.

Isn't that Special?

Special effects filters may let you go wild and crazy, but they can also let you add great subtlety to both images and text. Because these programs let you interactively apply as much or little of an effect as you need, you can grace your images with

very conservative effects. Alien Skin (www.alienskin.com) has just introduced Eye Candy 4000, a set of 23 Photoshop filters which, with a click of the mouse, can change any humdrum graphic into a wild piece of art.

Eye Candy 4000 for \$169, gives you new filters such as Marble, Melt, Drip, Corona, and Wood. The software contains hundreds of presets that create complex effects immediately with unlimited Undos. (See a review on page 37.)

If you're looking for Illustrator plug-ins, Virtual Mirror's Vector Studio (www.virtualmirror.com) for \$130 gives you tools

such as Envelope Mesh, which lets you bend and manipulate artwork; Morph Brushes, a collection of brushes that lets you paint detail and distortions on vector outlines; Selection Hat, which lets you name and save selections and recall them at will; and more.



Slight Corrections

While you can edit images with high-end imaging programs, if all you need to do is adjust exposure, color correct, and do simple cropping and rotating, have a look at some specialized utilities such as QBeo's PhotoGenetics 2 for a \$30 download or \$40 on CD (www.qbeo.com). This program performs adjustments to hue, gradient, color balance, contrast, gamma, color temperature, color shift and saturation. IntelliHance Pro 4, for \$200 from Extensis, analyzes your images to determine the best settings for color corrections and lets you preview the results.

for Web feature from the previous version that makes it easy to view different variations of image compression schemes and determine how long they take to download. It also

contains an upgraded version of ImageReady, which specializes in Web graphics, animations, and JavaScript rollovers. Photoshop 6, for \$609, adds vector capabilities for Web designers.

But Photoshop is not the only image editing game in town. Corel Photo-Paint 8 (www.corel.com) for \$319, is a professional program that contains a collection of photo retouching tools for images, photo editing, and painting. Photo-Paint features many image enhancing and special effects filters to improve the quality



glows. You can watch as individual brush hairs pick up underlying colors. Painter can also import images from both Photoshop and Illustrator.

It's a Draw

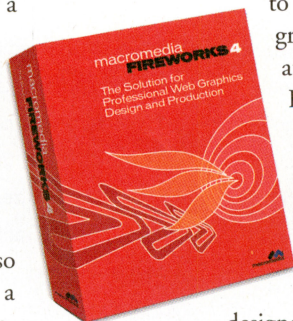
While pixel-based programs such as Photoshop are now beginning to incorporate vector capabilities, if you're working with drawings, logos, and illustrations, try one of the vector-based drawing programs such as Macromedia Freehand 9 (www.macromedia.com) for \$399, or Adobe Illustrator 8 for \$399. While both are professional programs, if you need sophisticated drawing and text capabilities,

and the ability to save in Web formats, either is the way to go. Macromedia FireWorks 4, also a vector program for \$299, specializes in creating Web graphics and animations, and can also work with pixel-based files created in Photoshop.

All in One

If you're looking for a quick way to create both raster and vector Web graphics, create a page layout, and automatically translate it into HTML, the text markup language read by Web browsers, check out Deneba Canvas 7 SE (www.deneba.com).

This Standard Edition of the professional level tool, for \$85, is specifically designed for home users, small business designers, and students. With Canvas you can edit digital photos, import images directly from your digital camera, crop and enhance pictures, and upload them directly to your Website. The program also lets you create GIF animations and the ever-popular JavaScript rollovers with a drag-and-drop



of your scanned images, and it also accepts Photoshop compatible plug-ins (see sidebar on plug-ins). It comes with an extensive library of images and fonts.

If you're looking for a fine art image, either hand-drawn or derived from a photograph, you will get more options and controls over the look of your piece with Painter 6 for \$399, also from Corel. Painter is a natural media painting program, as opposed to merely an image editing program, and it gives you vast latitude as to how your image looks. It lets you electronically simulate media such as felt pens, charcoal, colored pencils, water colors, and oil paints. The program also lets you paint with patterns, gradients, noise, fire, and

interface. Canvas also lets you work with vector-based images.

The package includes 10,000 clip art illustrations and 500 fonts. When you have all of your page elements assembled, just arrange them the way you'd like them to appear and Canvas can write the HTML for you to upload your page to the Web.

Corel PrintOffice 2000 for \$40 gives you a set of publishing tools and many customizable templates, clip

art images, and photos to help you create a Website. This application includes Corel's Photo House 5, a application that lets you alter, touch up, and enhance your digital images. After you create your page, you can post it to the Web with a mouse click.



Clip Art

Okay, so you're not an artist. Few people are. But if you need art for your Website, look no further than Web Explosion 20,000, a royalty free Web graphics library for \$50 by Nova Development (www.novadevelopment.com). This package contains two CD-ROMs full of bullets, buttons, clip art, and more in GIF and JPEG format and a 124-page printed catalog.

Looking for irreverence on a grand scale? Check out Web Parts from Art Parts for \$89, (www.eyewire.com/products/clipart/artparts) which gives you an abundance of zany and humorous illustrations in Web format.



Go For It

Whether you use photographic images, draw your own graphics, or depend on clip art, a great variety of art programs at your disposal can make your Web site a rewarding and inspiring creative experience. **MHJ**

Tip...Software Updates

It helps to keep system and other software up to date. With **online access becoming more prevalent**, software developers are increasingly releasing updates via online services.

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What Can I Say Window	X	X
Run AppleScripts	X	X
Create Text Macros	X	X
300,000 word Background lexicon developed with Oxford University Press	X	
Dictate into hundreds of applications	X	
Command & Control of hundreds of applications	X	
Supports ScriptPaks	X	
Built-in Script Editor	X	
Customizable Feedback Characters	X	
Lag Time (time each took to finish entering text)		
AppleWorks 6.0.4	2 sec.	38 sec.
Outlook Express 5.0	1 sec.	25 sec.
Word 98	3 sec.	71 sec.

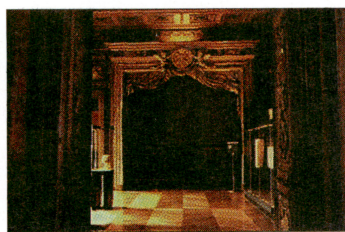
*iListen is available in versions with and without a headset.

The Art World

What is art? And how can one possibly view it from a computer screen? While that question has never been answered to everyone's satisfaction, since the start of the Internet phenomenon, museums of all kinds have used the Net to promote their collections. So you want to check out the Louvre Museum but you're not in Paris? No problem. Just log on.

Mona Lisa

Speaking of the Louvre Museum, you can access the home of the Mona Lisa in English, French, or Spanish at www.louvre.fr. The home

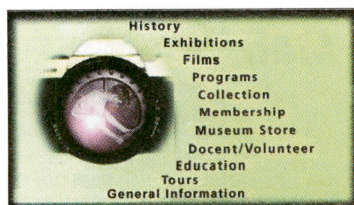


page is a simple table that contains text links and images, but be warned, your monitor must have a resolution of at least 800 x 600 to view it properly. The Collections section gives you numerous stills of famous paintings and lengthy descriptions. However, if you want a better feel for the museum's collections,

the most arresting part of the site is a virtual reality tour of the museum's various branches entirely in QuickTime, including the Oriental Antiquities Galleries, Sculptures Galleries, Paintings Galleries, Medieval Louvre, and more. Be sure to have QuickTime 4 installed.

PhotoGraphic

Famous photographers such as Matthew Brady, Alfred Stieglitz, Berenice Abbott, Dorothea Lange, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Judith Golden, and many others, document a time and — one could argue, a place — that is no more. If you're in the mood for the photographic side of life, either documentary or fine art, have a look at the Museum of Photographic Arts Website at www.mopa.org. The simple JavaScript construction of dynamic buttons on the home page displays different images in a clever camera lens interface as you scroll your mouse over the main menu. This well-organized site, which gives you text navigation as well as an image map on each page, is full of great photographs. While the photos are obviously compressed for Web viewing, they hold up remarkably well when viewed on the computer screen.



The King

Mona Lisa, Schmona Lisa. So you're not into fine art? You're not alone! Have a look at the Elvis-A-Rama Museum at www.elvisarama.com, which boasts more than \$3.5 million in Elvis

memorabilia. It's glitzy, it's tacky, it's, well, Elvis.

Get an up-close view of the King's stage-worn jumpsuits, his guitars

and piano, his black, eight-passenger '55 Cadillac Fleetwood tour limo, and thousands of items that offer insight into various stages of Elvis's life and musical career. This simple Website, while long on images, lacks the descriptive copy we craved. Then again, we suppose if you really have to ask, then he's not really The King to you.



Just Plain Folk

A minimalist look pervades the Museum of Craft & Folk Art's Website at www.mocfa.org. The home page offers a clean white background with abstract, slowly fading animated icons representing Fire, Water, Earth, and Air, delivering a simple message as you scroll your mouse over each one. But even though it looks as if the icons are links, you actually have to enter the site through the Welcome link. The design carries the motif of white space throughout, though its framed structure sometimes leaves scarcely enough space for its contents. An innovative scrolling feature, which fits with the site's horizontal layout, lets you view works from the museum's current and upcoming exhibitions, which concentrate on contemporary craft, American folk art, and traditional ethnic art.



Sweet Tooth

Go to Sees.com for a delicious gift that'll please the chocolate-loving Valentine in your life. The California company

remains a favorite among those who've tried its delectable goodies. Complete with holiday gift boxes, milk and dark chocolate assortments, peanut brittle, toffee, and nuts, See's will ship almost anywhere to put a smile on your loved one's face.

www.sees.com,
800-915-7337



Love Is In the Air

Each year, smack dab in the middle of February's cold days, Valentine's Day nuzzles up to warm our hearts, sometimes without warning. This year, prepare with tender loving care. You'll make Cupid proud and your sweetie happy with a little help from the Internet. Read on for some splendid ideas that say "Be Mine" all over again.

Roses Are Red ...



This site is as lovely as the flowers it sells. Visit FlowerBud.com for an order of fresh flowers to be cut and shipped on the same day to your Valentine. Before choosing an arrangement of flowers for that special someone — from classic long stem roses to orchids or daisies — read up on the flower's origin and characteristics, including size and fragrance. When you're at the site, be sure to check out The Flower Press, FlowerBud's online magazine for bloom enthusiasts.

www.flowerbud.com, 877-524-5400

Lover Boy

If your husband has spent the past year making up for the fact that he forgot Valentine's Day last year, or if your boyfriend bought you a Brita water filter for your last birthday, you might want to direct him to this site. (Unless, of course, you find water filtration romantic.) AutoRomantic.com is designed by men to help men in the realm of romance. If he signs up with the Casanova service, he'll be notified of special occasions, such as your anniversary, by email. Imagine not having to nudge him with gentle reminders. The site comes complete with gift ideas, including links to other online sites for jewelry and flowers, and romantic ideas, such as "Hand write a card or mushy note and secretly stick it in her purse before she leaves home." My goodness, talk about one for the ladies!

www.autoromantic.com



Culture Club

Don't take him or her to a chain restaurant and a lousy movie this year — plan something special for Valentine's Day 2001. Let CultureFinder.com help you find just the right event in your area. Sign up for a free membership and explore genres — including art, dance, opera, and theater — to help get the wheels turning for a memorable night out. You can search specific dates you're interested in, as well as particular venues. The Seattle Repertory Theater is performing "A Midsummer Night's Dream" on Valentine's Day, for example, and Boston's Wang Center for the Performing Arts is performing "The Phantom of the Opera." See? It's a snap to get a bit creative.

www.culturefinder.com, 877-278-7849

Be My Cyber Valentine?

Today's computer age makes for some interesting relationships. If you have a virtual Valentine, a special someone you met via an online dating service or in a chat room, somebody you're 97% certain could be Ms. or Mr. Right, don't suppress your feelings. Visit FrogMagic.com and send him or her a token of your affection — all you need is an email address or a chat name — without having to retrieve physical address information. After you choose a gift — chocolate, flowers, jewelry, etc. — your Valentine receives a gift I.D. in his or her email inbox, and is asked to supply shipping information. This site allows you to retain your anonymity until you're 100% certain about your soon-to-be significant other.

www.frogmagic.com

Let's Get Cookin'

Culinary School on Your Mac

No need to "button up," as Moms always warn. Stay indoors for an adventure. Rediscover your kitchen and its components — oven, spices, a packed fridge, utensils — during these chilly winter months. They make for edible explorations in your very own home.

Whether you live solo or with a big family, awaken dormant taste buds with the help of cooking software for your Mac (as always, the most special ingredient). Unless you're already a cuisine artist of sorts, there are titles out there to bring ideas to your household's present menu.

Family Feast

A daily testament to life's hectic schedule is the monotonous cycle of meals that most families share. English muffins or cereal for breakfast, a sandwich for lunch, and one from a handful of options for dinner, including standards such as pasta, salad, and chicken. All good things, but perhaps there's a different way to prepare them.

From the editors of *Woman's Day* magazine comes *The Woman's Day Cookbook*, complete with over 500 recipes for new versions of these staples. Search by category — Soups, Pizzas and Breads, Salads, Chicken and Turkey, etc.

By Carolyn Blackburn

— or by recipe contents. Find a recipe for Chicken and Bok Choy

Stir Fry in the Recipe Index, under the Chicken & Turkey subhead, or perform a Recipe Search by typing in "chicken" as your main ingredient, which brings back 41 recipes. You might also be interested in searching this recipe database by preparation time — great for working moms and/or dads — from less than 15 minutes to any length of time. And of course you may search recipes by nutritional content, including calories, sodium, fat grams, and protein. A search for a Soup-Salad-Sands (sandwich) recipe, with 5 - 10 grams of fat and 50 - 100 calories per serving, brought back three listings, including Romaine Salad with Cucumber Dressing.

A terrific feature included in this title is Video Tips. Once you've chosen a recipe, link to this for tips that relate to it. The Video Tips for Apple-Almond Coffee Cake include Measuring Flour (loosely measure it!), Skinning



Almonds (nope, they don't grow 'em that way), and Testing for Doneness (the old toothpick trick our Moms taught us).

Another nifty function of this title is the Custom Cookbook. If your paper recipe file is overflowing, perhaps it's time to transport those family gems to your Mac. Search the *Woman's Day* library for new delectables (and edit them if you so desire, adding your own notes for future reference), or type your traditional family recipes into the Custom Cookbook for safekeeping. This feature allows you to categorize your own recipes, and then incorporates them into the program's Recipe Search.

The Woman's Day Cookbook, \$27, Multicom Publishing, 206-622-5530, www.m-2k.com

Calorie Counter

Designed by Black Cat Systems, a Mac-only software developer, Diet Sleuth is a nutritional database and personal health logbook for those who are either health-conscious or

gearing up to be. If you're interested in a fairly easy way to tally **your** intake of cholesterol, calcium, protein, and fiber, among others, this is the tool for you. Simply select what you daily consume from the listed categories of food groups — 5000 different foods from 21 categories, including Dairy, Poultry, Cereals, Nuts & Seeds, etc. — and the Diet Sleuth will quickly calculate your Daily Total

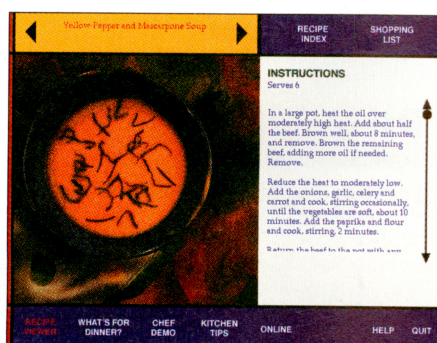
Nutrition. This is a truly wonderful feature for folks who want to chart weight loss, which has obvious peaks and valleys. If you save your Diet Sleuth charts, you can refer to your progress to find what you did differently during the week that you lost 2.5 pounds vs. the week that you lost 1.

Up to five people with varying needs and concerns can use Diet Sleuth on a single Mac. In addition to the included food groups, you can create and edit your own food choices in the Custom Foods Editor, found under the Action menu bar. The program also allows you to create a group of Favorite Foods, for quick access to commonly enjoyed edibles.

Diet Sleuth is not a cooking program, per se, but it's the perfect complement to full-on cooking/recipe titles. It does include a Recipe Editor, which allows you to enter custom recipes, with the nutritional information automatically calculated, based on ingredients. *Diet Sleuth*, \$35, Black Cat Systems, www.blackcatsystems.com

Dinner Party

So you want to have a few lucky participants over for a savory soirée. From the editors of *Food & Wine* magazine is another Multicom title, *The Best of Food & Wine*. With over 200 recipes, it promises to inspire your creativity. This program, like *The Woman's Day Cook-*



The Recipe Index lets you search by category — Hors D'oeuvres & Starters, Fish/Shellfish, Desserts, etc. Create a menu for your dinner party, and drag each recipe to the Shopping List, which organizes a list for you to print out so you won't forget anything when you're at the store. Also, from the Recipe Index, pop over to Recipe Viewer for wine suggestions to complement the dish you plan to serve.

Be sure to check out the kitchen tips available in this program. When you're serving others, it's wise to shop and prepare well. When you want to whip up something for yourself and your family, without having to run out for groceries, check out the What's For Dinner? page, which allows you to search for recipes starting with ingredients you have on hand at home. A search for pasta brought back 35 results. Add parmesan cheese and 13 recipes come back — as you add items, it searches for the recipes that include all listed ingredients.

The Best of Food & Wine, \$27, Multicom Publishing, 206-622-5530, www.m-2k.com

book, has a simple and tasty-looking interface, including Chef Tips with world-class chefs, such as Julia Child and Jacques Pépin, demonstrating imperative cooking tasks. It was awe-inspiring to discover how to chop an onion (before the otherwise inevitable tears start flowing).

Bon Appétit

For over 6,000 more recipes of fish, side dishes, salads, and pies, etc., check out the Digital Gourmet for \$39 at www.teletype.com/gourmet.

Let these CD-ROMs assist you in the kitchen. If nobody in your family wants to help you shop, chop, measure, and simmer, at least you can count on your trusty Mac to march with you across new, delicious terrain. **MHJ**

Kiddies in the Kitchen

When your little ones are still clinging to your apron after you've run out of appropriate tasks for their small hands, sit them down at your Mac for an adventure in *My Disney Kitchen*. The title offers



yummy interaction for 3 - 7 year-olds. They'll be greeted by safe kitchen fun everywhere they click.

Make A Cake Oven prompts kids to bake a cake — from mixing the batter with a blender to decorating with all the necessary frosting tools — and to invite Mickey and Minnie over for a slice afterward. The Good Morning Griddle directs young cooks to pay attention; if they let the eggs, pancakes, and bacon cook too long with-

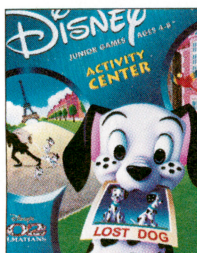
out flipping and serving them, they'll disintegrate.

There's also a Magic Recipe Box from which kids can choose what they'd like to prepare for real when imaginary time is over. *My Disney Kitchen*, \$15, Disney Interactive, 800-900-9234, www.disney.go.com/disneyinteractive

Check it Out...

For cooking tools online, go to **www.MasterCook.com**, where you'll find more than 8500 recipes, nutrition and substitution calculators, and more.

What a Wonderful World



Kid (and adult) favorite, Disney, has released several titles for the Mac in the past couple of months, including two that coincide with recent film releases, *The Emperor's New Groove* - Groove Center and *102 Dalmatians* - Activity Center. Each title runs \$30 and features arcade-style and creative fun for the 4 - 8 year-old in your life.

www.disneyinteractive.com, 800-900-9234

Senior Sources

Spend some time during the winter months curled up at your Mac getting to know some new friends. At Write a Senior Citizen, a heartfelt site developed by a teen-aged brother and sister duo — Kelly and John Thomas — folks (over 700 seniors regularly visit the site) can find pen pals from all over the globe. Extending their ongoing local community service to the Internet community, these siblings have established something to be quite proud of. Targeted at seniors looking for correspondence with their peers, this site comes complete with a search engine to find a compatible pen pal, as well as a free personal Web page for

those over 55 who sign up. Senior Spotlight and Our Newest Pen Pals are two sections that put ongoing and new visi-

tors in the limelight, and Senior Cookbook allows pen pals to contribute recipes from their corners of the world. Visitors are also encouraged to take part in Chat Forums, where they may discuss topics such as senior travel tips and gardening. Take a look, and get those typing fingers ready to type some letters! (Proceeds generated from ads at www.writeseniors.com are donated to the Alzheimer's Association for research purposes.)

www.writeseniors.com

Write a Senior Citizen

Phys. Ed.

Veteran Physical Science teacher, Doug Gilliland, has developed the Physical Science Series, which includes over 25 introducto-

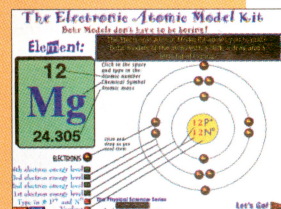
ry level Chemistry and Physics programs for high school students. The programs engage students because they're highly interactive; students

must solve tasks

at hand in order to progress. This adventure game feel is additionally enhanced by graphics, sounds, and animations, which all help students to better understand the concepts being presented. The software — with titles ranging from *Acids, Bases, and Salts*, to *Graphing Scientific Data*,

and *Newton's Laws of Motion* — is available for individual and site license use in schools.

www.physicalscienceseries.com, 941-377-3634



Tell Us What You Think!

MacHome likes to hear from our readers. Take a few minutes to let us know what you think of this issue, as well as what you'd like to read about in the future. Visit us at www.machome.com/febfeedback

Huge Story Lines

Humongous Entertainment favorites — Putt-Putt, Freddi Fish, and Pajama Sam — are moving into the world of kiddie literature. Humongous and Lyrick Publishing have teamed up to bring six new titles to a store near you. Due this month are five paperbacks, including *Putt-Putt: Lost in Time*, and *Freddi Fish: A Whale of a Tale!*, 24-page adventures for \$4 each. Leading the collection, though, is *Pajama Sam: Out to Lunch!*, a lunch-boxed shape hardcover with its own handle, for \$6. Kids will adore seeing friends from their favorite computer games in the pages of these new books.

www.humongous.com, 800-499-8386

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Monopoly

It was only a matter of time before the classic board game, Monopoly, joined its brothers and sisters to become (how? why?) a crossover-to-computer smash hit. Perhaps you're a true Monopoly fan, and you'd love to play an online game during your lunch break. Perhaps you've consistently lost the game in its original format, and the desire to win keeps you up at night — you realize the opportunity to actually beat the title's built-in AI (artificial intelligence), when it's set on novice, of course.

Whatever the reason, you absolutely must be a fan of this game to enjoy *Monopoly* in this form.

Unlike *Scrabble* and *Risk II*, two members from the MacSoft family, this sibling is rather dull.

The traditional board and playing pieces — including shoe and top hat — remain in tow, as well as introducing new twists to Monopoly staples, including Community Chest and

Chance cards that come to life, and real estate from most major cities (buy the Empire



\$23, MacSoft
800-229-2714
www.macsoft.com

State Building for only \$320!). Other new goodies include the animated auction; if you choose not to buy a property, you'll be forced in front of Mr. Monopoly's auction block. Unfortunately, that's probably where you'll have the most fun.

One thing about board games is the joy of moving your piece around the board. This game takes that pleasure away. You only need to click the Roll Dice button, and away your piece roams. Some might like the animated 3D effects and repetitive voiceovers, such as "roll those bones, doggie" when you use the dog playing piece, but most will likely become annoyed.

There's enough going on here to satisfy Monopoly die-hards, but the rest of us won't really care if we ever pass Go again.

— Carolyn Blackburn

M&M's The Lost Formula

Don't be fooled by the box, which says that M&M's *The Lost Formula* is for kids 5 - 10. Trust me, this one's for the whole family. Mom and Dad, big bro and big sis, will all be sneaking games when the young ones aren't looking. This game is plain (and peanut) fun. Lead Yellow, the acrobatic and adorable peanut M&M, through colorful and rapid mazes, solving math equations of varying difficulty along the way.

Players must advance through levels of play, from Get Out of Town, a fantastic ride along the streets of an M&M town, to Stampin' and Sortin', which has Yellow running and jumping through the area of the M&M chocolate factory where candies get ready for packaging. At the onset of each game, kids can

choose the math drills they'd like to focus on: either addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division.

Parents interested in a heavy-duty educational math title might want to look elsewhere. This game certainly offers consistent quizzing, but quickness of answers given, and keyboard and mouse agility is stressed, as opposed to calm and collected testing. Kids must get friendly with various gameplay commands to move Yellow along, which may not be an easy task, particularly for younger players and kids who don't do much gaming.

But overall, this title is a rollicking good time. Kids will want to play over and over again, and along the way, they're sure to giggle and learn those basic math skills that'll last them a lifetime. (Note: Check the game's system requirements before picking up a copy.)

— Carolyn Blackburn



Ages 5 - 10
\$25, Simon & Schuster
Interactive
888-793-9972
www.simonsays.com

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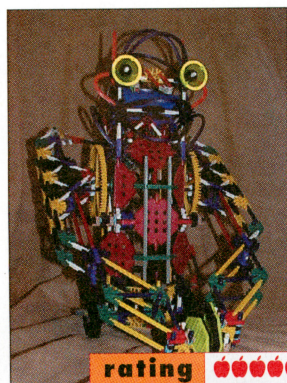
Come visit us at MAC World Expo, San Francisco, Booth 549
800.253.0564 • www.schoolzone.com

TechnoK'Nex Computer Control Lab

TechnoK'Nex, a computerized robotics building set, is geared toward both younger (grades 1-4) and older (grades 5-9) students. Building pieces for TechnoK'Nex are unique: everything is created with rods, wheels, connectors, pulleys, and tires. As with all robotics, the brain (computer), mechanical parts, and sensors are the core components, and these are nicely designed for even young children's small hands.

The eight robots and motorized devices you can create with K'Nex — including the Oscillator (a whirling amusement ride) and the Zephyr (a windmill) — are fascinatingly unique. I got TechnoK'Nex for grades 5-9+ thinking it would be a challenge, and it definitely was. It took me most of an afternoon to finish the 20-inch Robobutler. The lab is meant for groups of three to five children, so in the classroom or at home, kids will work most efficiently in teams with fellow students or with siblings.

Teachers and parents will appreciate the educator's guide, reference cards, and activity cards, all exceptionally well developed by the K'Nex education team. They're bright and colorful enough to keep children's attention, yet thoughtfully



rating ★★★★★

\$380 - \$530,
K'Nex Industries, Inc.
Grades 1 - 9
888-222-5639
www.knexeducation.com

structured to maintain high levels of educational and curricular integrity for the adults involved. Activities are also structured to meet many educational standards for which teachers are held accountable, such as teamwork, problem solving, creative thinking, discovery, and trial and error (or trial and "success").

Building Robobutler is only the beginning of the challenges. Activity cards lead teams of students through programming Robobutler to having it "do" specific tasks, such as picking up and putting away toys, taking out the trash, cleaning the garage, and setting the table. (Now that's progress!)

Overall, TechnoK'Nex is perfect for the educational environment that promotes integrated learning, and for the home that advocates creative, critical thinking in conjunction with a "toy" that encourages learning.

— Cathy Parise

Arthur's Camping Adventure

After children outgrow Barney, the next name likely to arouse interest is Arthur (not the fabled British king). The Learning Company's *Arthur's Camping Adventure* has captured the reasons children and parents love the book series about the young aardvark and his adventures: its dynamic characters, good-natured humor, and lessons about friendship and teamwork.

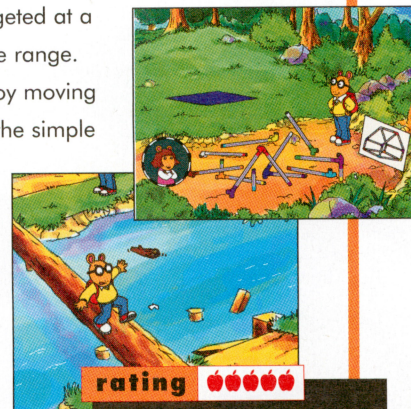
The CD-ROM is targeted at a wide developmental age range. Three year-olds will enjoy moving the characters through the simple interface. Seven year-olds will like the way it tests their memory.

Arthur and his friend, Buster, look for objects that will help them alert a forest ranger that they need to be rescued. Along the way, the game tests their ability to observe, remember, and react to the environment. One fun challenge is figuring out how to grab a sack of food next to a sleeping bear. Arthur needs to navigate through a clever version of a maze game, where only the portion illuminated by Arthur's flashlight can be seen. Get through that, and the payoff in the bear cave is humorous and worth the effort.

Thought was put into creating an educational environment that's also just plain fun. Arthur and Buster fall down a rock slide and, if players are quick enough, grab hold of a branch leading to a ledge containing a rare fossil. Players can help Arthur put a tent together by connecting color-coded poles, and help him cross a log bridge across beaver-infested waters. Also, a wonderful pop-up book offers printable encyclopedic facts about plants or animals that kids take "snapshots" of.

In the end, Arthur's and Buster's resourcefulness pays off with a rescue and, the way all camping trips should end, a scary story told around the campfire.

— Howard Lovy



\$30, The Learning Company
Ages 3-7
800-358-9144
www.mattelinteractive.com

Jeopardy

"This is Jeopardy," Johnny Gilbert announces, and he's right. In a faithful adaptation, you're able to star on the TV quiz show without any embarrassing tests.

This is the game of providing questions for answers. Type your guess into a text field after choosing "What is" or "Who is," to lead your question. The game somewhat forgives misspelling, but if you're more than a few

letters off your answer will be considered wrong. While this is frustrating, it's a better option than providing multiple-choice answers.

Up to three players can face-off in this virtual intelligence arena. If you have fewer people, you'll face formidable computer talent. Choose from a few game types, such as the standard TV format, and get buzzing.

One shortcoming is that Alex Trebek isn't in the game enough.

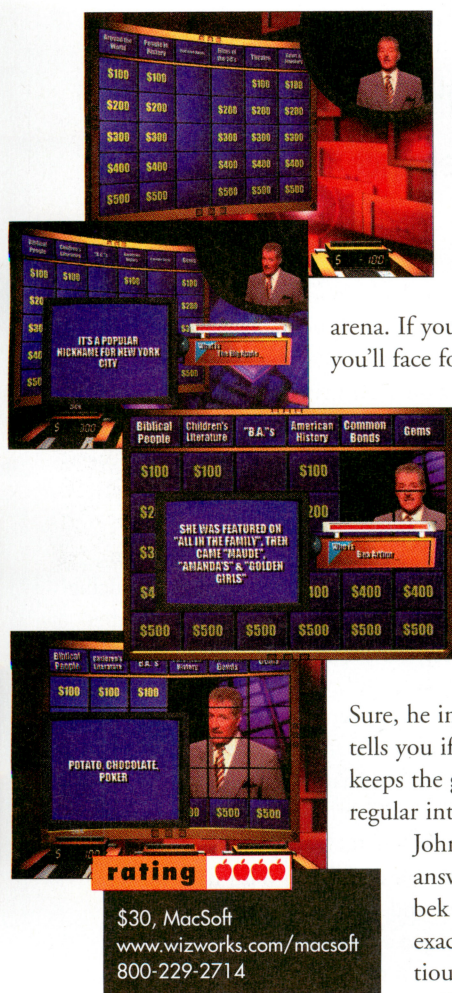
Sure, he introduces categories, tells you if you're correct, and keeps the game moving, but regular introduction announcer,

Johnny Gilbert, reads the answers. And what Trebek does say — "that's it exactly" — gets repetitious. The specific categories also repeat; each

category is made up of the same five answers, so if you run into Musical Theatre again, you'll probably get a harmonious sense of déjà vu. It took only a handful of games to revisit categories, yet there were a lot of fresh categories mixed into those games.

Let's end this review as Alex and Johnny would want. A fun option for quiz fans, its categories may reoccur, but this faithful adaptation is entertaining anyway — "What is Jeopardy?"

— Zack Stern



On-Track Transition Math

Kindergarten is just around the corner at our house, so I'm concerned about math and reading readiness. I can easily identify what skills my child needs to read well, but the building blocks of math readiness are less obvious. School Zone's CD-ROM workbook *Transition Math* has come to the rescue.

The set touches on those skills that come between simply being able to count and being able to do arithmetic. Skills covered include sequencing, greater and less than, shapes, patterning, and telling time. The colorful workbook that comes with the CD also covers writing numerals and counting coins.

The CD is child-friendly to the max. The instructions are clear and simple, with verbal help and written examples. There are only three or four problems per page, so it's not intimidating. The pages are bright and full of likeable objects, such as food, kittens, and toys. Correct answers are rewarded with a smiling star and a compliment. Children can go back and work on incorrect answers anytime they choose, or forge ahead and be sent back to correct mistakes after completing the entire workbook.

Between pages, there's a quick animated scene, and after every two pages, the child is rewarded with a brief video game. (There are three that rotate, for variety.) The problems are randomized, so the child can go through the workbook repeatedly without memorizing the answers.

While School Zone says *Transition Math* is for K-1, it seems a good teaching tool for my preschooler. My guess is that most first-graders would use this title only for review.

— Sandy Amann John



Mysterious Adventures

Myst III: Exile Will Pull You Into Its Vast Universe

Because of its attention to story, technology, and gameplay, all Mac users should encounter *Myst III: Exile*. For both casual and frequent gamers, *Exile* promises to be the most engaging experience in years.

"I really think that this strikes at the heart of the mass market gamer, the casual gamers," explains Creative Director, Phil Saunders, stressing that *Exile* is a game for everyone. "It's definitely something we've taken great pains to make accessible, but at the same time we bring our adventure game sensibility to it as well."

Presto!

During a top-secret visit with game developer Presto Studios, at its headquarters in San Diego, I got to hear the sounds of a flower opening, see behind-the-scenes concept drawings, and be the first outside of Presto to play part of *Exile*.

But in this peep-show atmosphere, the *Exile* producers quickly hid things that they didn't want uncovered, and were cautious about giving away too much.

Producer Greg Uhler would spout his quote for the day — "I don't want to spoil the story for you" — whenever he didn't want to

release more details. As I played *Exile*, mousing-around a rocky coast of a sun-soaked island, the other producers cheered and shouted tips of, "I wonder what's over at the edge of the point," and, "I wonder where that hole goes," while Uhler frowned on their help.

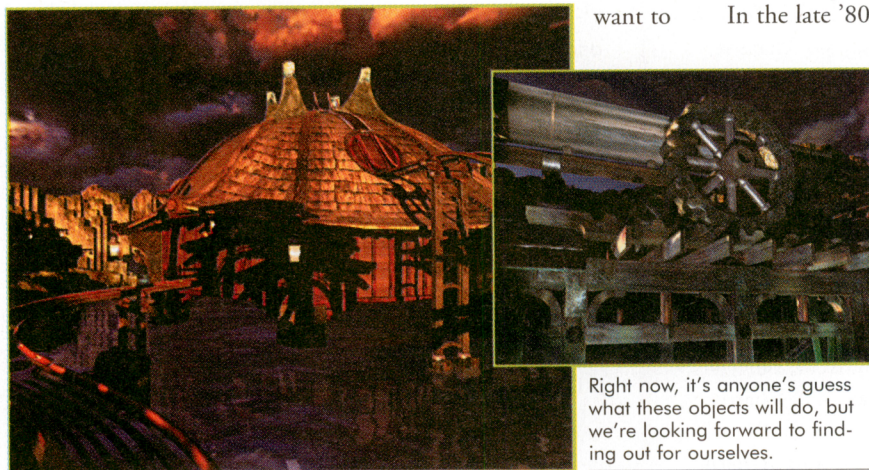
And throughout Presto's halls and offices, filled with homage to creative influences like *Star Wars* and *Toy Story*, certain signs and notes were turned around to conceal their contents from visitors.

What they did show was incredible: Zen islands on flowing seas, museum-quality views, and vertigo-inducing realism. Because of its perfect scenery, incredible aesthetics, and accessibility to new users, *Myst III: Exile* will be a game that every Mac user will want. If you've stayed away from games because you've been wary of weak plotlines and complicated interfaces, *Exile* promises to provide a compelling story in a world that's easy to navigate.

History and Mythology

In the late '80s, Cyan released *Myst*. With its detailed story and incredible graphics, *Myst* changed adventure games. The sequel, *Riven*, improved upon the lush visuals and interactive storytelling of the original. Cyan, now concentrating on other projects, licensed *Myst III* to Presto Studios. Under Cyan's watchful eye, and with pressure from the fans and media, Presto has a lot of expectations to meet. More than just a third act, *Myst III: Exile* should exceed the hype of the *Myst* series and become the premier *Myst* title.

Exile will continue in the *Myst* tradition of adventures, which distinguishes itself



Right now, it's anyone's guess what these objects will do, but we're looking forward to finding out for ourselves.

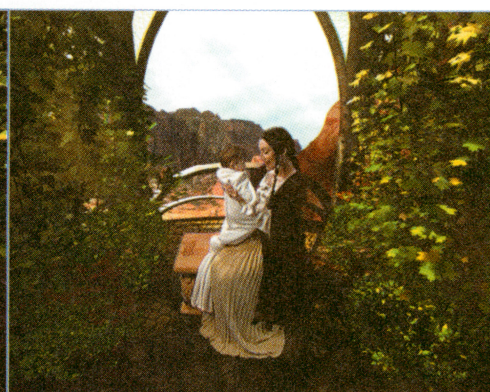
from other games by its painstakingly refined look and feel. Created with 3D rendering applications, all of its worlds are simultaneously photorealistic and fantastical. That's the trademark *Myst* touch — presenting things that don't exist in reality in a believable, gape-

ahead. To push a lever or touch your surroundings, you could just click on it. *Exile* will keep this navigation system, but it will drastically change the views.

Using new technologies, *Exile* will expand the sense that players are a part of the story. While you'll still only be

clear goal." This mantra is the main ideal that will keep *Exile* entertaining for all players; you will know in which direction to progress, and all of your actions will add to the experience.

With five main worlds, or ages, players will face a central puzzle that can be



To integrate live actors within a digitally created world, Presto's team first shot footage in front of a blue screen, then cropped the performers frame-by-frame, and finally placed the characters in the *Exile* world.

inducing way. Mechanical nature, extraordinary animals, and organic technology pull you into this setting.

Exile also features live actors who were shot on empty sets and have been digitally placed into the computer-generated worlds. They'll talk and react to you in a more humanistic manner than animated characters could. By shooting many different videos of an actor in various situations, the game is able to play a video of a character that responds to your actions.

Immersion

"It's more than just a computer game," says Writer and Designer, Mary DeMarle, of *Exile's* engaging environment. "It's really more of an experience. Anybody who loves going to the movies, watching television, or reading, will love this game." This environment is created by how you see and navigate through *Exile*.

The previous *Myst* titles relied on static photos of your surroundings. From a certain vantage point, or node, you could look only straight ahead. If you clicked on the side of the screen, you might be able to see an adjacent direction, but the view would just jump to a new photo. If you wanted to walk forward, you'd click

able to stand on specific, though numerous, nodes, you'll be able to look anywhere in a spherical, 360° by 360° area. And while you're looking around, everything in the world, from sparkling water to interactive characters and objects, continues to move.

DeMarle explained how this fluidity impacts the experience. "With our 3D technology, you really do feel like you're in this world. You can be looking [from] a node and there can be an animation playing, and you can pan away from it. By the very fact that the screen is so active while you can be free to look around really puts you that much more in the experience."

Active Puzzles

Great attention has been placed on making all of the puzzles in *Exile* relate to the plot because Presto is conscious of how people lose interest in games when the challenges lack significance. Years ago, in a prominent brainstorming room that has been consistently filled with drawings, screenshots, and props of *Exile's* progression, Saunders inscribed on a whiteboard: Game, "A series of meaningful choices in order to reach a

completed after secondary, relevant obstacles have been overcome. These obstacles stay meaningful by linking to the story; the final goal, for example, will relate directly to understanding and overcoming the villain.

Novel-Sized Story

With such detailed stories presented in the first *Myst* games, it's a big job for a new company to follow Cyan's vision. For example, these games chronicle the D'ni (pronounced dun-E) people who create portals to other worlds. After lengthy study, they're able to literally write a book that links to another age. This mythology is so strong that DeMarle had to consult with Cyan's "D'ni Historian" to get it all right. And while *Exile* maintains the exact facts that had been presented in previous *Myst* games, it is a self-contained excursion that will be complete for people who haven't seen the other *Myst* titles.

Exile's story is rooted in your quest to help *Myst* series staples, Atrus and Catherine, reconstruct their society. Years ago, internal strife destroyed the D'ni people, scattering them throughout many ages. With the help of



Exile's scenery was created by laying photographs of textures, such as wood, grain, or rocks, on top of 3D models.



Catherine, Atrus has been attempting to reestablish contact with their society from their current world, Tomahna. A few new characters are a part of your journey, including Yeesha, their young daughter, and a new villain.

This villain, whose name was still concealed at press time, emerges to exact revenge on Atrus because Atrus' two sons had ruined his home-world in the original *Myst*. Played by veteran actor, Brad Dourif (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, among many other movie and TV roles), this villain has had access to ages adjacent to Atrus and Catherine, and he's been preparing for their return.

In keeping with the secrecy of the pro-

ject, DeMarle explained the character's name without actually stating it. "I saw him as a character who is really striving to hold onto a dream against all possibilities. It made me think about a literary character who I felt represented that.... a name that I then altered slightly to make it a little more fantasy."

It's Coming

Exile is going to fully support the Mac with the choice of a hybrid set of CDs or a DVD at its April 9, 2001 release. It will also work with Mac OS X, and support early iMacs and other basic Macs. "The original *Myst* was a big success on the Macintosh.... We've always done the bulk of our creation on the Mac side. This is coming from a pretty Mac-centric group so it's pretty important to [support our platform] as well," explains Saunders.

Myst III: Exile will let you rummage through someone else's vibrant dreams while playing a

Behind the Scenes



"Just the mood of the ages, the mood of the music... this [villain] could be here. He could be anywhere."

Mary DeMarle, Writer

and Designer, on how the dark music and aesthetics give the impression that the villain is lurking around every corner

"What has happened here? Why was this place created or settled?" Phil Saunders, Creative Director, explaining what he thinks about when constructing the worlds and corresponding story



"The biggest challenge is that there's about two ways to do it right and about 11 million to screw it up."

Dan Irish, Producer, on expectations

"Some of the sounds have literally hundreds of layers."

Jamey Scott, Sound Designer



"There's something new in every door that you go through, in every ladder that you take."

Daniel Achterman, Associate Producer



character within a story. With its simple interface, game players of all levels will be able to experience this adventure. *Exile* is the top game all Mac users should watch for in 2001. **MHJ**

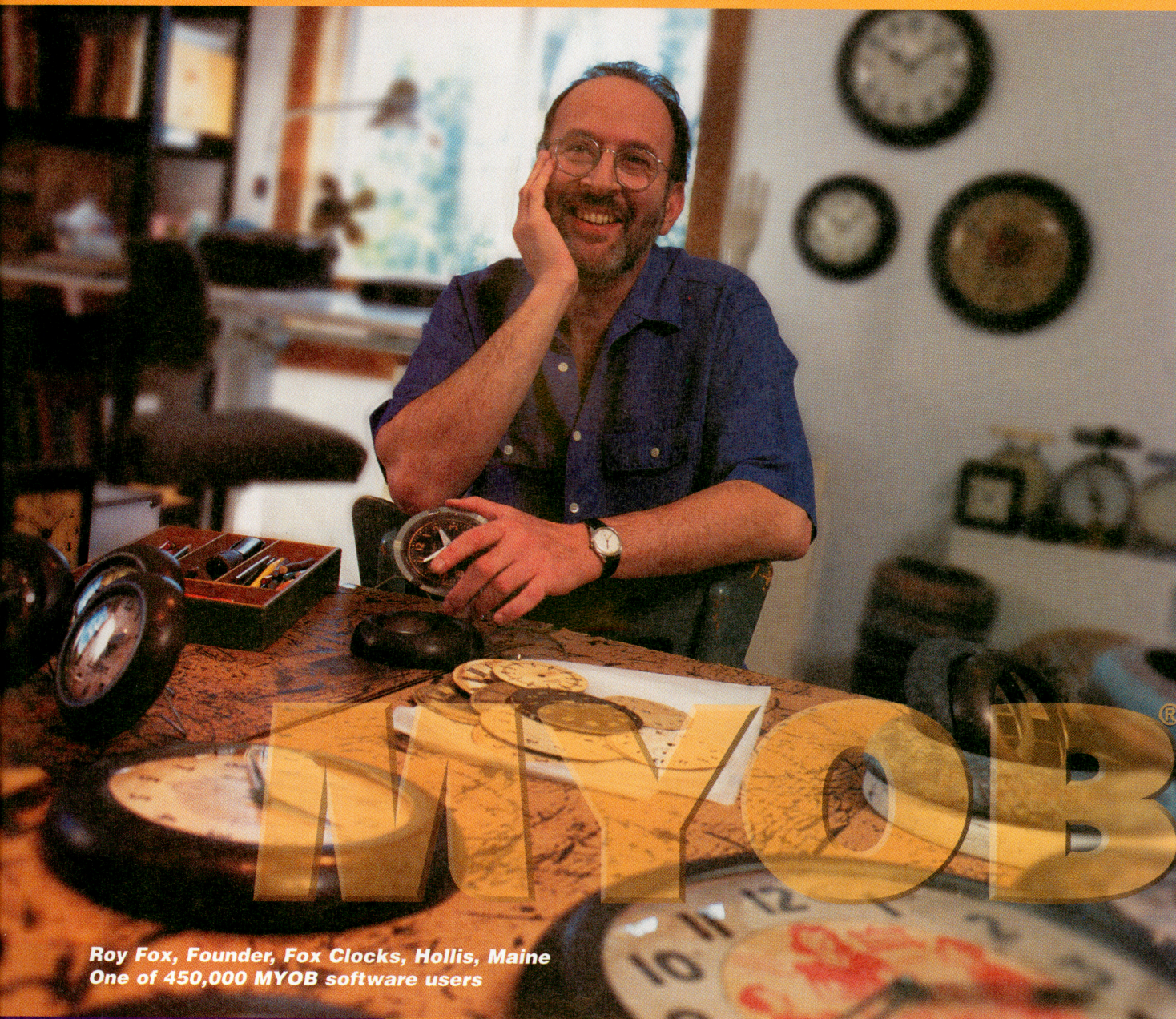
Did You Know?

An adventure game emphasizes story and puzzle-solving over reflexes. Players have objectives to complete, but they need to figure out how to fulfill those goals by overcoming obstacles. How do you open a locked door? What does this lever do? How can you operate a vehicle? Each new discovery advances the story.

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Two's Company, Three's Even Better

MacSoft, trusted purveyor of Mac games, plans to ship two more titles during the next couple of months.



Watch for *Pong* and *Monopoly Casino*, each breathing new life into games of yore. *Pong*, slated to ship in March, hosts 3D graphics and splendid animation for new twists on the video game that started it all. And *Monopoly Casino*, set to ship this

month, hosts over 40 Monopoly-themed games intermingled with Vegas glimmer, including slots, blackjack, poker, and roulette. And don't forget to check out *Driver*, which is available now. This highly anticipated title puts you behind the wheel of various muscle cars on the streets of San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, and Miami. Each game sells for \$30.

www.wizardworks.com/macsoft, 800-229-2714

Hit the Slopes

Buckle into your snow shoes, skis, or snowboard; it's the time of year to frolic in the powder. The Ski Area Screen Saver, for \$20, allows

you to listen to snow phone reports of over 60 resorts on the Internet with RealPlayer G2. If you can't head to a resort in your area, bring

the mountains to your Mac with this CD-ROM; trail maps become your screen saver.

www.cylogic.com,
800-295-6442

By Carolyn Blackburn

Apple Bites

Following is taken from an interview with Bard Williams, Apple's Senior Manager of Worldwide Markets. During the conversation, he talked about Apple's outlook regarding games heading into 2001.

Q: How has Apple's stance regarding computer games on the Mac changed during the past ten years?

A: Games have always played an important role in Apple's growth and success. Since the creation of the first Apple computer, we've worked hard to improve the user experience and to build tools and technologies that enable developers to bring exciting, high quality games to our platform.

Today, Apple is involved with more game developers in more ways than ever before. We continue to work with these developers to push the limits of technology to make gaming on the Mac a fabulous experience.

Q: How has Apple fought to give games more shelf space in stores today? What obstacles does Apple face?

A: It's not so much fighting for shelf space, it's gaining visibility for titles that are already there, and making them easier to find. That's why we've launched an aggressive campaign to get developers to use the Mac logo on their products.

We're also working with selected mall stores to make sure they have the latest and greatest titles on their shelves, and we've helped with in-store materials and displays to make these titles more visible.

Q: Publishers who have traditionally abstained from consistently releasing Mac-compatible games are now showing much more interest. Can you comment on the amount of interest new developers and new publishers are showing toward the Mac as compared to past years?

A: Developer interest in developing for the Mac OS is unprecedented. For example, at our Worldwide Developer's Conference in 2000, attendance was up 40% over 1999. With key game titles selling faster than ever, more and more developers are moving rapidly to ensure Mac titles are available.

Tell Us What You Think!

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www.machome.com/febfeedback

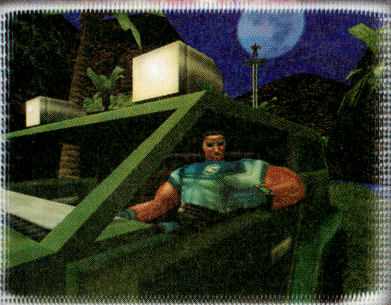
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Ryan S. Adams, MacGamer's Ledge



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Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K.2

Let's get one thing straight. Julie is a babe. Also known as F.A.K.K.2, she's a resourceful comic book heroine who lives on a peculiar planet where no one ages. Not only is she a looker who wears scanty outfits, but she's a fearless warrior/huntress who uses flaming swords and rapid-fire Uzis to take on Gith and his invading force of monsters.

Okay, so *Heavy Metal F.A.K.K.2* doesn't have a terribly original plot. But the home planet is gorgeous, (even prettier than Julie), and the Quake III engine chugs along superbly. There's a training session to help you handle Julie's moves and weapons, and lots of cute animals and gruesome monsters to please the eye.

The frame rate and controls are smooth. Combat is satisfying. Julie wields an arsenal of weapons that ranges from slingshots to explosive devices. She also changes costume several times, for no discernible reason other than flashing new portions of flesh.

So what's the bad news? The adventure is great fun, but it may

not last long enough for hardcore gamers. While beginners may find it sufficiently challenging, a practiced gamer could probably finish it in about 20 hours. And, because the story is linear, the replay value is somewhat shortened. The puzzles are simple (push-the-button, open-the-passageway), and many of Julie's weapons, except for her swords and Uzi, are relatively useless. Also, Julie's acrobatic repertoire seldom includes anything beyond running and jumping.

But hey, if you can overlook the story's brevity and Julie's plotline warts, you'll have a blast. And isn't that what gaming is really about?

— John Lee

Beach Head 2000

You may not remember the old Apple II version of this game. It was mildly entertaining. Unfortunately, this long-incoming sequel doesn't do it justice. Sure, most sequels can't live up to the original, but *Beach Head 2000* is competing with a game that was black and white, and used single pixels to represent men.

Here's the basic plot: Imagine you're a German soldier on the beach of Normandy. While the game actually takes place in the modern day, essentially, you're a machine gunner mowing down men as they pour off the landing boats. While I usually have a strong stomach for violent games, for some reason, *Beach Head* made me feel nauseous.

But aside from the sick gameplay, there's plenty of other things to take issue with here. *Beach Head* automatically changes your screen resolution, so as soon as you quit, your desktop icons will all be rearranged. There's no options outside of "High resolution" or "Low resolution." The controls can't be changed. The documentation is horrid. And, last but not least, there's little support for hardware outside of the G3/G4 crowd. This wouldn't be a problem if *Beach Head 2000* wasn't a relatively simple game graphically.

There's almost no reason to buy this game. While it might prove entertaining for a few moments, it's mostly sickening and frustrating.

— Alex Handy



rating 

\$40, Gathering of Developers
877-463-4263
www.godgames.com



rating 

\$30, MacSoft
800-229-2714
www.wizworks.com/mac

Majesty

If players could peek inside the palace that predominantly sits on the grounds, or playing field, of *Majesty*, they'd see themselves sitting on the throne. This fantasy kingdom simulation game crowns you king or queen, placing you in charge of an ancient land, complete with gold, wizards, peasants, guilds, monsters, and bounties.

The object of the game is to complete an objective before

you run out of money for support — i.e., heroes, guard houses market places, blacksmiths, etc. — leaving swarms of bad guys the freedom to overturn your empire. Retrieve and safely return the Magic Bell, Holy Book, and Eternal Candle to the palace, and Rescue the Prince, among other missions. The brilliance of *Majesty* lies in how you complete these tasks.

Like other real time strategy games, it's up to you to build from the ground up. Get your hero guilds built, a marketplace up and running, heroes recruited ... and fast. The difference, and *Majesty's* specialty, lies in the fact that

you don't order your heroes around after you recruit them. You can influence their actions by placing either Attack or Explore flags around the map with bounties of

gold, but for the most part the characters do as they please.

The game becomes more enjoyable after you've racked up several hours of play — by then you'll be more familiar with your surroundings, and how to best maneuver to achieve your goals. The fun really starts as you learn more about the powers-that-be, including numerous gods, spells, and potions.

Majesty is certainly majestic, but it isn't glitch-free. The two wide-angle choices are necessary for viewing the immense activity on your screen, but you'll wish you could get closer. With so many colorful episodes taking place, you'll no doubt be aching for a better look, especially at particular times, like when your hero is killing a medusa monster (she's enough to make your skin crawl), or when your wizard is casting a spell. But with its original gameplay, you'll probably revoke the bounty from MacPlay for not providing the most detailed graphics.

— Carolyn Blackburn



Cheat Sheet

This month, straight from the MacPlay headquarters, Jason Whong offers tips for the company's latest offering, *Majesty*.

Beginner Tips:

Recruit heroes early in the game. The longer they are out exploring, defending, and fighting, the more likely they are to gain experience and become

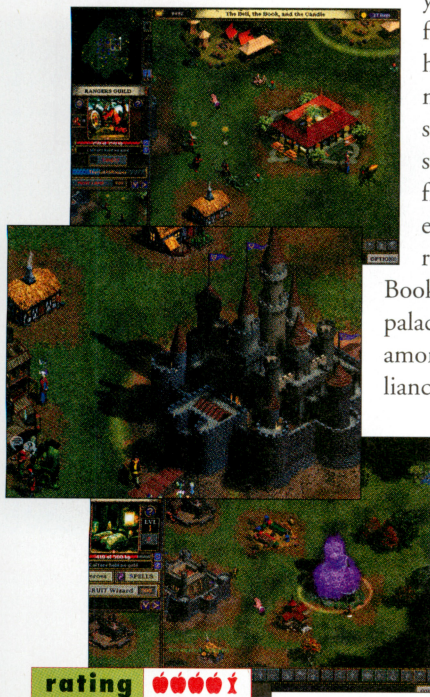
stronger. If a hero dies, replace him or her immediately. While there are varying strategies

concerning how to start a game, one extremely important goal is to get your palace to level 2 as quickly as possible. A level 2 palace generates more peasants and tax collectors than a level 1 palace. Upgrading to level 2 requires a certain amount of gold, plus four heroes in your roster.

Advanced Tips:

(Multiplayer) Even paladins can be persuaded to attack the palace of their monarch if you dangle enough gold at them. While placing a bounty of a few thousand gold coins may only convince rogues to turn against their king, a reward of a hundred thousand gold will sometimes convince other classes of heroes to rebel.

A guardhouse has several functions: It is the home base for a city guard, a resting place for Solarians and peasants, and also another place for tax collectors to take gold. Without a good guardhouse network, your tax collectors will have to walk all the way back to your palace before you can get any gold. Try not to build too many guardhouses, though, because most buildings cost more to build when you already have some built.



rating 

\$30, MacPlay
214-855-5955
www.macplay.com

Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force

Star Trek Voyager: *Elite Force* is everything a Trek first-person shooter (FPS) should be. It draws players into a decidedly "Star Trek" world, presents a reasonable story, and provides enough hokey fun to remind you that this is science fiction (read: Neelix the quirky chef). The biggest flaw of *Elite Force* is that you'll wish the game had lasted a bit longer.

Elite Force feels just like a "Voyager" TV episode. All of the main characters are represented, and most use voiceovers of the actual actors. And the ships that you'll

encounter, from a Borg cube to a space station hobbled together from old parts, feel like they're taken straight from the show.

The gameplay in *Elite Force* is balanced between shooting and puzzle-solving. From a first-person perspective, you need to figure out how to open doors, maneuver around objects, and complete your goals, all while wielding a phaser, the standard-issue "Star Trek" weapon.

With conditions of varying difficulty, *Elite Force* will appeal to all gamers. Beginners have time to slowly learn the game

without it becoming overwhelming; enemies are dispatched easily, and the puzzles entertain instead of confuse. Veteran gamers face a few tough foes, and they'll move through the game at a fun, though brisk, pace. Unfortunately, at this rate the story will last only about a week. When the single-player game ends, turn to the multiplayer game, which is enjoyable, though you may prefer the weapons of other FPS games.

"Star Trek" and first-person shooter fans, your game has arrived. It won't last as long as some, but you'll have at least several nights of Starfleet fun ahead of you.

— Zack Stern

Code Blue

I haven't played doctor since I was a kid, and the cute little girl next door let me put her arm in a sling and wrap her head in gauze (thereby provoking her parents to show me what a thankless task it is to cure the world's ills).

Code Blue is the fourth in Legacy's line of low-cost medical role-playing games, with familiar Hollywood faces acting as the ER staff. You get all kinds of medical partners, from the usual curmudgeon doctor, to warm and fuzzy nurses.

And there's plenty of video to tell you where to go, what to do, whether you did it right or wrong, and what you'll do next.

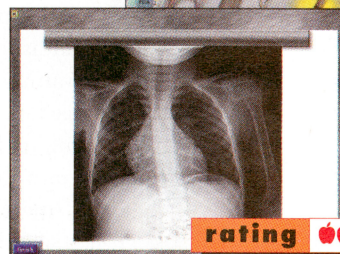
But basically, the game boils down to a string of 35 yackety patients stretched out on gurneys, suffering maladies that range from dog bite to child abuse. You're a med student with the clock ticking, and you have to pick the proper tools to make a diagnosis, treat the patient, and solve ethical dilemmas.

If you're planning a career in medicine, you might find *Code Blue* to be an educational game, even interesting. But what about the rest of us? The game designers appear to be under the impression that the whole world is as fascinated by medical routines as are the doctors themselves.

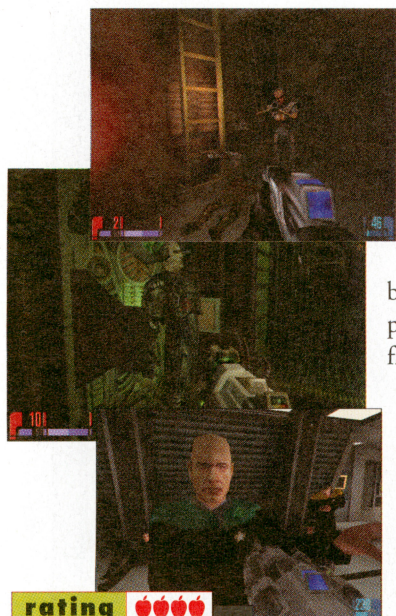
We're not discussing TV medical dramas here. We're talking about the daily drudgery of bedpans, hypodermic needles, and whiny patients. That's supposed to be exciting?

What will they come up with next? Emergency Plumber? Adventures in Tree Surgery?

— John Lee



\$30, Legacy Interactive
888-708-8715
www.legacyinteractive.com



\$50, Aspyr Media
888-212-7797
www.aspyr.com

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MAJESTY

The Fantasy Kingdom Sim



Use your economic might to hire heroes from among 16 different classes. Reward their efforts handsomely to complete 19 royal quests.



Your foes are many. Your enemies have chosen to enlist the services of 32 different types of monsters, each more dangerous than the next.

Majesty: The Fantasy Kingdom Sim. Fortify and enhance your castle with over 30 different building types, each one with its own unique strategic and economic benefits. Watch your kingdom come alive as its growing infrastructure begins to attract new inhabitants, both good and evil. Behold the power of magic. Master its heady powers and it will serve your kingdom well. You are King. You Rule.

"Majesty: The Fantasy Kingdom Sim is one of the hottest strategy/sim titles available this holiday season."

Jay Swartzfeger, MacCentral.com



MACPLAY
www.macplay.com

Going Once, Going Twice...

An Introduction to Online Auctions: Part I

Online auction sites have become a great resource, allowing sellers and buyers to connect at a price that matches the demand. This month, we'll explain the eBay auction site (www.ebay.com) from a buyer's perspective.

Buyer Beware

Once you click on a listing for an interesting item, you are taken to the seller's item description page. It's important to make an assessment of the seller's trustworthiness before you place a bid. The first factor to consider is the rating number in brackets to the right of the seller's member name. The higher the number, the more positive feedback the seller has received for previous sales (from prior buyers). Small stars adjacent to the seller's screen name indicates that the seller has reached a positive feedback milestone. Sellers with a negative number have had more disapproving than positive comments, and should be avoided. To view the comments in the seller's feedback profile, simply click on the rating number.

Sellers without any comments are likely new to eBay, and as such have no significant sales history. A pair of sunglasses appears to the right of the seller's member name if they have held that member name for less than 30 days.

By Chris McVeigh

The second factor to consider is whether or not the seller maintains an About Me personal page on eBay. Look to the right of the seller's member name for a small "me" icon. If one exists, you can click it to view the seller's personal page. Normally, these pages reveal the seller's actual name and location, and in some cases include a picture of the seller. If the seller does not maintain a personal page, examine the auction listing carefully for additional information. Sellers that conceal their identification and limit the methods they can be contacted may be highly suspect.

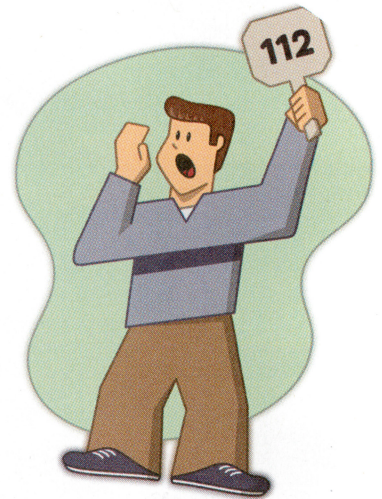
The final factor to consider is whether or not the seller has included pictures of the item within their auction listing. This allows you to see exactly what you are bidding on. Sellers without photos may claim the item is in mint condition, but you can't know for sure without evidence.

Placing Your Bid

Once you have made your assessment of the seller, scroll down, and place your bid. Most auctions on eBay employ proxy bidding. Instead of watching the auction and bidding the moment you've been outbid, simply enter the maximum amount you're willing to pay for the item. eBay will then outbid any other bidder for you, so long as your maximum bid exceeds their maximum bid.

Once you have won an auction, it's important to understand it is a binding agreement between you and the seller. Do not bid on multiple auctions at the same time, with the intent to pay only for the lowest priced item. This can earn you negative feedback from the sellers you shrug off, and in many cases, it will lead to an eBay suspension. In most cases, the seller will accept credit cards via an online auction payment service such as Billpoint or PayPal. This is the safest way to purchase an item, since there is an official record of the transaction. It also permits the seller to be paid immediately for the product, allowing them to ship the item as soon as possible. Cashier's checks and money orders are less desirable, since they can get lost in the mail, or even worse, a shady seller can claim never to have received your payment.

Next month: Selling an item online. **MHJ**



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Discover how the AirStation Wireless Series will empower you to reach new levels of freedom and ultimate connectivity. Imagine, you can enjoy easy, seamless connectivity to the Internet while you "roam" or, share files and peripherals with the rest of those guys who are unfortunately stuck in a "wired" network!

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* PC Only. Note: AirStation is compatible with MAC OS, Windows 95/98, NT 4.0/2000 ME. © TechWorks is a registered trademark of TechWorks (Delaware) Inc. All other names are registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Modem Model (WLAR-L11-M)

- Connection Interface:
 - 10 Base-T/100 Base-TX (1 Port)
 - Line-Port (Analog Line - 1 Port)
 - Phone-Port (Phone/Fax - 1 Port)
- IP Masquerade functioning (Sharing Dial-Up Account)
- DHCP Server/Client Functioning
- Wi-Fi Certified, IEEE802.11b
- 2.4 GHz, DSSS Transmission Method
- Mac or PC-environment; will work w/Apple AirPort Card



Router Model (WLAR-L11)

- Connection Interface:
 - 10 Base-T/100 Base-TX (1 Port)
- IP Masquerade functioning (Sharing Dial-Up Account)
- DHCP Server/Client Functioning
- Wi-Fi Certified, IEEE802.11b
- 2.4 GHz, DSSS Transmission Method
- Mac or PC-environment; will work w/Apple AirPort Card



Standard Model (WLA-L11)

- Connection Interface:
 - 10 Base-T/100 Base-TX (1 Port)
- DHCP Server/Client Functioning
- Wi-Fi Certified, IEEE802.11b
- 2.4 GHz, DSSS Transmission Method
- Mac or PC-environment; will work w/Apple AirPort Card



AirStation™
Internet Sharing Device

MP3 Player, Movie Trailers, and iBook Keyboard Anchors

Q I've collected a lot of MP3 songs, which I play with Apple's QuickTime Player. It works great, but I am beginning to get frustrated that I can only play one song at a time. Is there any way I can create a song list so that the songs play one right after another, without requiring me to double-click on the MP3 file and click play each time? Or is there another application that I can use to play MP3s?

— Jesse Abernathy

A Although Apple's QuickTime Player may do the job, it's really not intended to be a robust MP3 Player. There are several shareware applications available on the Internet designed specifically to play and manage MP3 tracks. Many of these applications support song lists and some

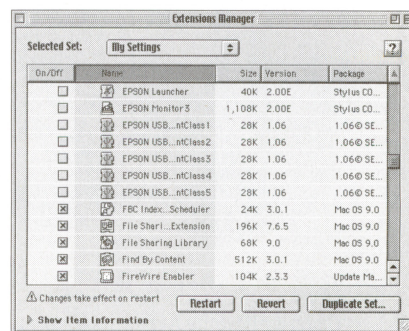
dred of different skins for Audion, so you're sure to find something you like. Audion is free for 15 days, but after that, you'll be asked to pay a shareware fee of \$17.95. You can download Audion at <http://www.panic.com/audion/download.html>.

Q The Sage iMac I bought last summer has begun to show wavy lines on its display. The wavy lines, which look like some sort of electrical interference, seem to get much worse when I click my mouse button on menu items. The interference seemed to appear shortly after I bought a new Epson Stylus 660. Did I do something wrong? Is there any way to fix this?

— Kevin Hachey

A Some people who bought Apple's Summer 2000 iMacs have been complaining about the appearance of these mysterious lines for some time now. It appears that the problem is tied to USB activity, such as mouse clicking, which may indicate poor electrical shielding somewhere in the computer. Apple has officially acknowledged the problem, suggesting that people move their iMacs to another location within their home or office to determine whether or not the problem is caused by environmental interference from other electrical appliances. If the problem persists, Apple recommends that you take the iMac to an Apple Authorized Service Provider for servicing. Please see <http://til.info.apple.com/techinfo.nsf/arnum/N31262> for more information.

Several users have also discovered a direct connection between Epson's Stylus printer drivers and the interference. Since you own an Epson inkjet printer, open the Extensions Manager control panel and turn off all Epson extensions and the Stylus driver. Once you're finished, restart your iMac. If the lines do not return, the problem was probably exacerbated by the



Epson printer drivers. Still, it's wise to take your iMac for servicing to make sure everything's ship-shape.

Q Since I upgraded to DSL, I've had a great time collecting movie trailers. There's one thing that's started to bother me, though. It seems that more and more trailers can't be saved. The QuickTime control bar is often missing the pop-up menu at the far right, or worse yet, the control bar doesn't appear at the bottom of the movie window at all. I tried to get around this problem by selecting "Save As..." from Internet Explorer's File menu, but either it just saves the HTML file or it reports the movies cannot be saved because the "Disk may be full." Now, I



even include graphic equalizers. The best of the bunch is undoubtedly Audion 1.5 from Panic Software (www.panic.com). In addition to its simple song list feature, Audion supports "skins," which are user-installable graphic faceplates for the player application. Panic's website offers hun-

know my hard drive is not full! What gives? Can I get around this?

— Ryan Lanteigne

A It seems that many movie companies are working with Apple to prevent viewers from saving trailers to their hard drives. The reasons for this move are unclear. It could be that the companies simply want to limit distribution of a trailer to certain web sites, such as Apple's, due to partnerships. It could be to prevent others sites from scavenging the trailer and posting it, ruining the originating site's exclusivity. It could also be that the movie companies want to carefully monitor how often the trailer is viewed to gauge audience interest in the film.

The good news is that there is a way to work around the restriction. Apple's QuickTime Plug-in tends to hide the downloaded movie files in hard to reach locations. Trying to recover the movie file after it downloads can be very difficult. It's therefore wise to be proactive. Go to the trailer download page with your browser. Chances are, you'll be asked to select a trailer size, and once you do, you'll be whisked to a page with a graphic that says "Click here to play." Now, instead of following the obvious directions, you're going to crack open the source code. Internet Explorer 5 users must select Source from the View menu, while Netscape Users must select Page Source from the same menu. You're then presented with a gamut of gobbledygook that may well terrify you. Remain calm, and press command-F to call up the Find dialog. Enter ".mov", and press return. You should instantly be whisked to the first appearance of ".mov." Now for the tricky part. You must select the entire address, starting at the end of ".mov" and continuing left until you encompass the "http://". Copy the long, convoluted address, and return to a regular browser window. Paste the address into the address bar, hold down the option key, and press return. This should automatically initiate a download, just as if you were saving a game demo or shareware application.

Occasionally, you will select the wrong address. You might even end up with the just the graphics that says

"Click here to play." In this case, simply go back to the source code and press command-G to search for ".mov" again. Select the next address and try it instead. It's a dirty workaround, but more often than not, you'll succeed.

Q My new iBook has been a true joy to use, with one exception. The keyboard makes a rattling sound when I press keys on its right side. It's driving me nuts! I've noticed that while the left side of the keyboard seems very sturdy when pressed down, the right side seems springy. Is there anything I can do? I really don't want to take the machine for servicing and have to part with it for a week!

— Shelly Ross

A Your description suggests your iBook keyboard isn't making full contact with the right side of its keyboard tray. You can give it a more firm seating with a few simple items: a pad of Post-It Notes and a pair of scissors. At the top of the iBook keyboard, look for two grooved clasps. Push down, and pull the clasps towards yourself to unlock the keyboard. Tilt the keyboard forward, and lay it on its face. Now, pull off a few Post-It Notes, and use the scissors to cut thin strips from the sticky section of the notes. Layer the strips on the plastic lip at the right of the keyboard tray to provide support to the keyboard. You should replace the keyboard as necessary to test the fitting. Don't place too many strips, or you'll cause the keyboard to be unbalanced in other areas! **MHJ**

have questions?

Got a Mac problem that's driving you nuts? Let us take a crack at it. We'll answer questions of general interest to all readers. All mail is assumed intended for publication, and we reserve the right to edit questions for brevity and clarity. When sending your questions, include your full name and phone number. Send your questions to:

questions@**machome.com**

MacHome Quiz

It's a free-for-all with the MacHome Quiz. Gather up the family, and challenge each other to a round of Mac trivia. Who is the most Mac-worthy of the bunch? Once the battle has finished, check on page 86 to see answers and if you've got real Mac mettle.

1. How do you change the pattern of your desktop?
2. How do you create an alias, and why should you?
3. How can you find a lost file on your Mac's drive?
4. How do you launch the Extensions Manager during your Mac's startup?
5. Name the two founders of Apple Computer, and where are they now?
6. What does MP3 stand for?
7. How much faster does a 12X CD-ROM drive play discs than an audio CD player?
8. How many kilobytes are in a megabyte?
9. What is a browser throbber?
10. What was eWorld?

CD-R Drives

Writing Information With Laser Light

Recordable compact discs (CD-R) are an excellent way to backup important data, send large files to colleagues and, of course, create your own music mixes. How does a small, home office device duplicate the work of a high-tech factory? Let's take a closer look at the science behind the technology.

Burnin' Up

Despite its outwardly solid appearance, a recordable compact disc is actually a complex sandwich of different materials. The bottom consists of a thick layer of clear plastic that protects the stored data and solidifies the disc. A coating of organic dye is layered above, which is in turn covered by a very thin layer of reflective metal (usually a gold or a silver-colored alloy). Topping it all is a clear lacquer coating that protects the upper surface from damage.

Organic dye is applied to the plastic layer of the disc in one continuous spiral. The spiral wraps around the disc an

incredible 21,888 times, from the inside of the disc to the outer edge.

Extended, the organic dye spiral

would stretch over 3.5 miles. This spiral functions similarly to the groove of an old vinyl record, guiding the recording laser along its path.

In a standard CD, the disc's metal layers houses the digital information through a series of dents known as "pits" and flat areas known as "lands." Data is written to a recordable disc by burning a series of pits in the organic dye spiral that matches the pattern of zeros in binary data (i.e., 0101111000101). A pit is created when the laser strikes the disc, melting a tiny spot of the organic dye. This change causes the spot to become slightly opaque. In contrast, lands (which represent the ones of binary data) are untouched by the recording laser and so remain transparent.

How Does it Read?

A CD-ROM drive uses its laser to read data from the dye layer. Laser light passes through each land, strikes the thin metal layer behind it and is reflected back to the reader's sen-

sors where a value of one is registered. In contrast, laser light that strikes a pit is refracted away from a readers' sensors. When these sensors do not detect reflected light, a value of zero is registered. This is a blistering-fast process — millions and millions of bits can be read each second.

The data layer of a recordable disc is very near the top. A deep scratch to the underside of the disc can cause the reader's laser to be refracted or reflected incorrectly, sometimes causing read errors. The data, however, actually remains intact. It's a very different matter if the top of the disc becomes scarred. A scratch that runs deep enough will physically damage the data layer, destroying some of the stored information.

Light Your Own Fire

Not long ago, you had to be very wealthy to own a recordable compact disc drive (CD-R). Times have certainly changed. CD-R technology has drastically fallen in price over the past two years. Drives now retail for as low as \$250, while discs can be purchased for just a dollar a piece. At these prices, no one should be without one. **MHJ**



The Classic Game of World Domination!

RISKTM II

It is the time of empires and armies, of countries and conquests. The world is at war and you are in command of an army fighting for global domination. Organize your forces in a ruthless campaign to crush your enemies and take their territories in this fast-paced game of strategy, negotiation and luck.



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"...virtually any family member can enjoy the game, it's a must have for strategy fans, and action fans would find it hard to resist Risk II's addictive gameplay."

— Mac Central —

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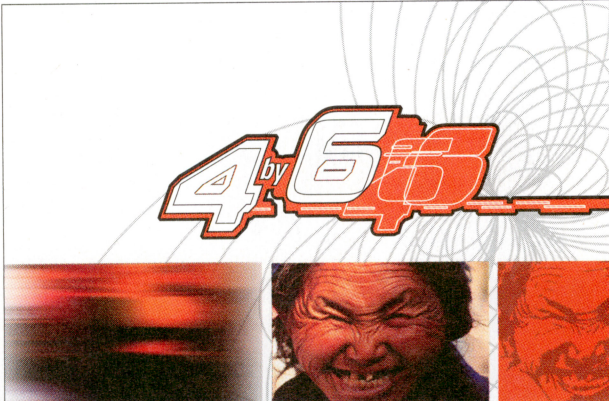
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Adesso	N/A	N/A	adessoinc.com	82
ARS Nova	206-889-0927	206-889-0927	ars-nova.com	85
Asante	888-491-4067	800-622-7464	asante.com	78
ASD Software	909-624-2594	909-624-2594	asdsoft.com	85
Bell Stor	800-800-1513	800-800-1513	bellstor.com	79
Camera Zone	800-784-7788	800-784-7788	thecamerazone.com	83
CH Products	N/A	N/A	chproducts.com	80
Compucable	800-344-6921	800-344-6921	compucable.com	78
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Contour Design	800-462-6678	800-462-6678	contourdesign.com	84
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Ez Quest	714-694 0031	N/A	ezq.com	81
Farallon	510-346-8001	510-346-8001	farallon.com	81
Formac	877-4Formac	N/A	formac.com	76
Griffin Technologies	615-255-0990	615-255-0990	griffintechnology.com	86
Harman Kardon	800-266-6202	800-266-6202	harman-multimedia.com	IFC-1
Hewlett-Packard	N/A	N/A	hp.com/gp/mac-connect	77
Leister Productions	717-697-1378	717-697-1378	leisterpro.com	86
Lind Electronics	800-697-3702	800-697-3702	lindelectronics.com	81
MacAlley	800-644-1132	800-644-1132	macally.com	86
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MacPlay	214-855-5955	214-855-5955	udgames.com	61
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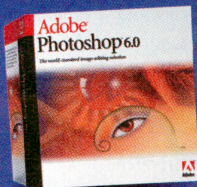
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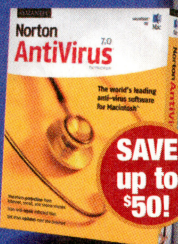
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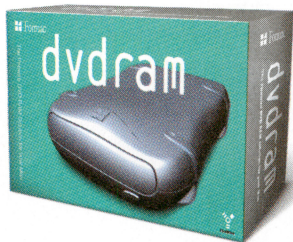
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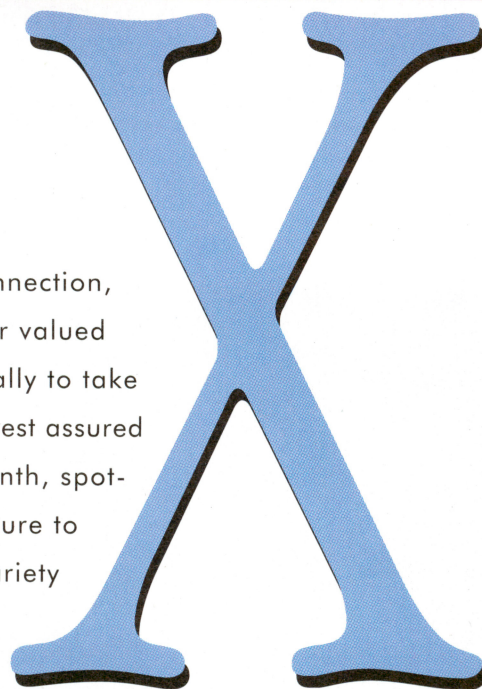


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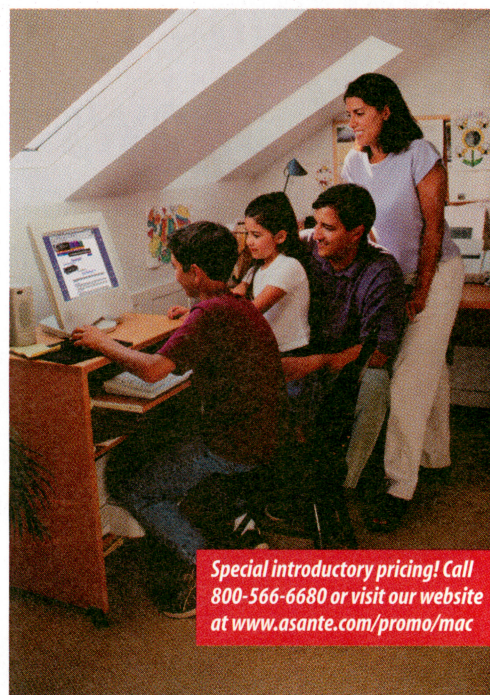


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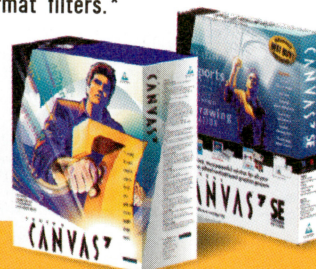
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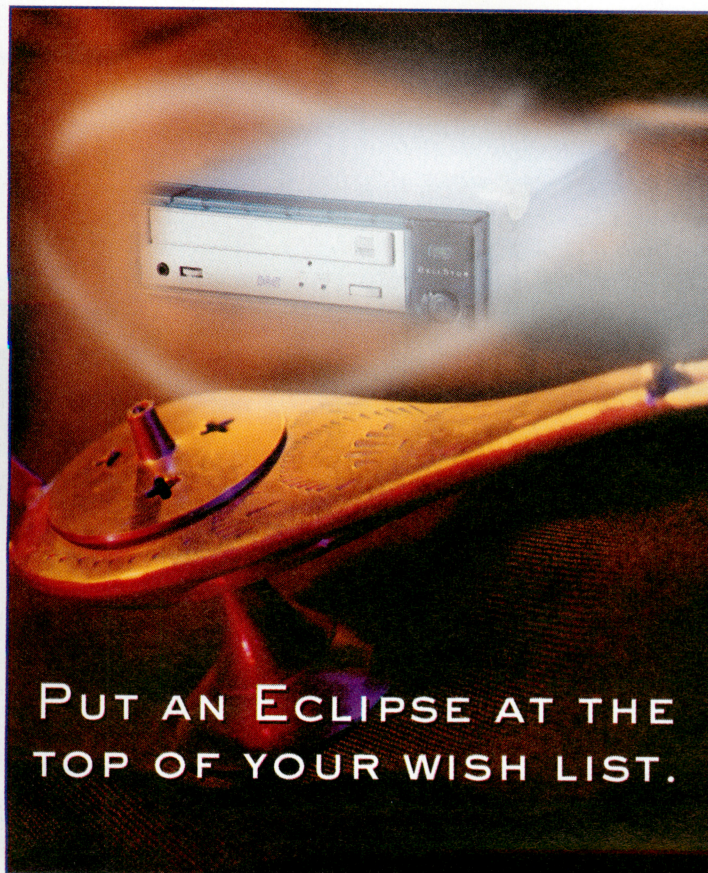
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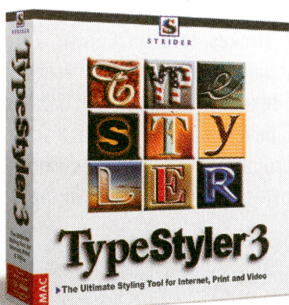
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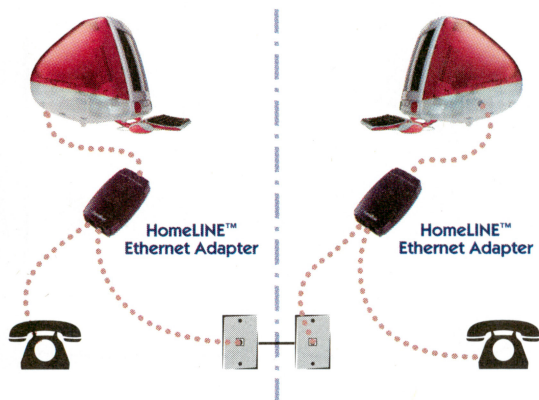
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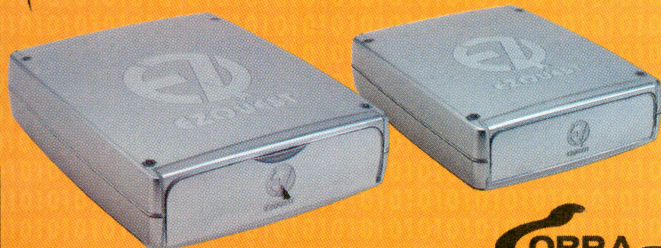
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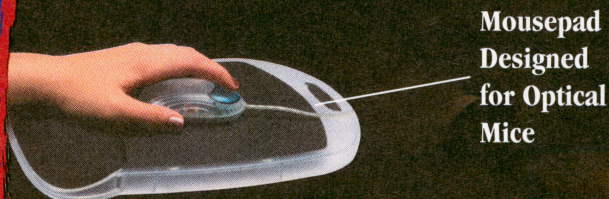
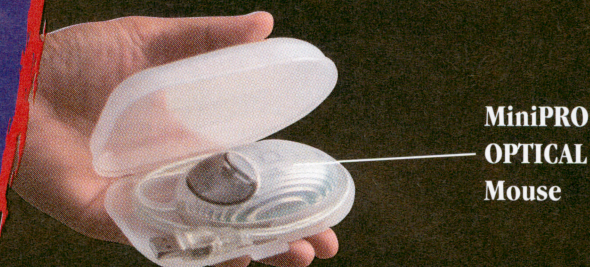
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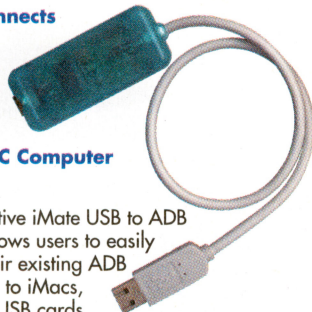
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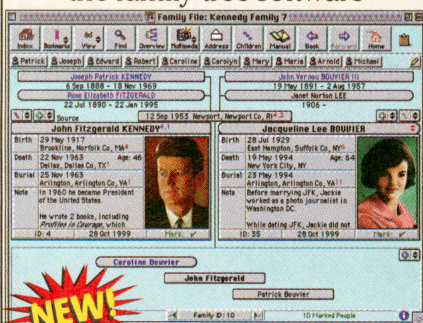
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MacHome Quiz Answers!!

1. With the Appearance Control Panel, select Desktop, pick a pattern from the Patterns menu, or choose an image from within your hard drive. Then click Set Desktop.
2. Creating aliases gives you access to your favorite applications right from your desktop or anywhere else you want. To create an alias, select a file, and choose Make Alias from the File menu. You can also type Command-M.
3. Go under the Apple Menu, launch Sherlock 2, and click on the hard drive icon. Type in part of the file name, and click the Magnifying Glass icon. Sherlock will display all files that contain those letters.
4. Hold down the space bar when you first boot your Mac, and you'll be able

to modify your extensions set without reaching the desktop.

5. Steve Jobs is now the CEO of Apple Computer. Steve Wozniak tells us, "I'm answering tons of email, and maintaining computers and networks most of the time. But I also teach computing to 5th graders through adults in Los Gatos, California."
6. MPEG audio layer 3, or Moving Picture Experts Group audio layer 3. MPEG is a video format, and MP3 is an audio code that is part of MPEG.
7. 12 times faster — the rating is in comparison to single-speed CDs, which includes audio CDs.
8. 1,024
9. Throbbles are the moving icons at the corner of your Web browser. The browser uses them to signal you that it is loading a page.
10. Apple's AOL-type online service, eWorld was canceled by CEO Gil Amelio in 1996 after a year and a half in operation.

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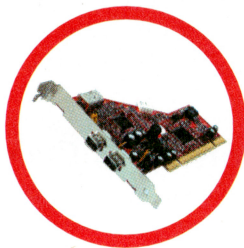


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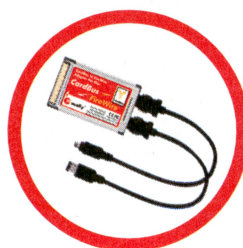


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A Teacher's Apple

Dreams of the Perfect Student and Educator iMacs

I'll admit it, I'm spoiled. My classroom (you can view it at www.ScienceMan.com) is equipped with seven 400MHz iMac DVs for student use. However, because of a couple of missing iMac features, I stick with an older, slower G3 All-In-One (AIO) for my teacher computer.

Once in awhile when my students are quiet and hard at work (yeah, right!), I'll drift off into a geek's dreamland and wonder: what would the perfect educational iMac be?

The Ins and Outs

I stick with the slower AIO mostly because of the video-out connection to mirror my desktop on a TV. Unfortunately, iMacs ship without this option. My dream iMac would leave out the modem to save a few dollars, and add S-video out. Most schools can't afford projectors for each

class, so I'm sure they'd appreciate being able to easily hook up to a TV.

By Alan S. Golub

I'm network-savvy, so my students save their work to a network volume. However, frequently a coffee-stained, frantic colleague will come to me with a Zip disk and say, "Can you open this file for me?" or "Can I print this file here?" My dream iMac would definitely come with a Zip drive. Come to think of it, I really could use a CD-RW as well. As student multimedia projects become more sophisticated, finding space to store them becomes tough, so a CD burner would be sweet.

Big Screens and Big Buttons

Drool collects at the corner of my mouth as I envision an iMac with a 17-inch monitor. Apple should see that there is a revolution in how schools purchase computers. Gone are the days of buying 30-60 units for instruction. Now, as technology is integrated across the curriculum, schools purchase computers in small lots to serve the needs of everything from food studies to language arts. In many of these classrooms (including mine) students share computers for group work, so a big monitor would be ideal.

And I cringe at how hard students can be on those poor little iMacs. Apple hit a home run with a more durable keyboard and mouse, but I'd also like a big, rugged power button. I would love a reprieve from having to pry loose those jammed little buttons.

Package Deals

Speaking of revolutions, science teaching is undergoing incredible changes with the availability of probes that can capture data. I want an "iMac science bundle" that comes as an all-inclusive solution for the science classroom. Pasco (www.pasco.com) makes great USB probes that would be perfect for this iMac. For example, \$375 buys you a bundle of probes that will allow you to measure temperature, pH, and heart rate (other probes are available too). Wouldn't it be positively dreamy and convenient if Apple and Pasco offered affordable iMac and probe bundle combinations tailor-made for a biology, chemistry, physics, or middle-school science class?

Rats... it's Only a Dream

My dream turns into deep fantasy as I picture myself selecting iMacs from a special education section of the Apple Store. I choose a teacher model equipped with S-video out, and 4 more student iMacs, each bundled with a different set of science probes for my multi-disciplinary classroom. Oh look! The Apple Store advises me that due to my purchase of five iMacs, I have the choice of any two free items for my class! I can choose from a scanner, zip drive, CD burner, or printer. Wait a minute, now Heather Locklear is massaging my bald head. Whoa, this dream is getting out of hand! **MHJ**

Medicine For Your Mac



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